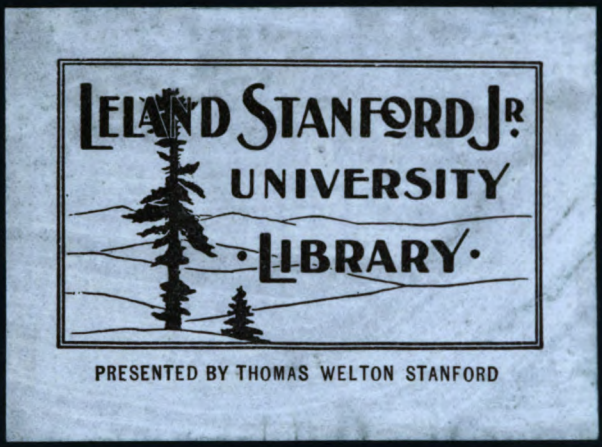
This is a reproduction of a library book that was digitized by Google as part of an ongoing effort to preserve the information in books and make it universally accessible.

Google™ books

https://books.google.com

136.21 .B882 C.1
The grand reality, bei
Stanford University Libraries
3 6105 046 658 568



PRESENTED BY THOMAS WELTON STANFORD

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

136.21
B882

Digitized by Google

James Smith Esq.
with the Editors compliments

THE GRAND REALITY

BEING

Experiences in Spirit Life of a celebrated Dramatist

RECEIVED THROUGH A TRANCE MEDIUM

AND EDITED BY

HUGH JUNOR BROWNE

Author of "The Holy Truth," "Rational Christianity," "The Conflict between Authority and Reason," "The Religion of the Future," &c.

"Light is come into the world, but men love darkness rather than the light."

"O, this strange mingling in of Life and Death,
Of Soul and Substance! Let me comprehend
The hidden secrets of life's fleeting breath,
My being's destiny, its aim and end."

STANFORD LIBRARY

GEORGE ROBERTSON & COMPANY
MELBOURNE AND SYDNEY
MDCCCLXXXVIII

Digitized by Google

149083

STANFORD LIBRARY

Digitized by Google

DEDICATION.

THIS book, which is a sequel to "The Holy Truth," published for the undersigned in 1876 by Arthur Hall and Co., of 25 Paternoster Row, London, is dedicated to

CHARLES HENRY FOSTER,

formerly of Salem, Mass., U.S.A., now a denizen of the spiritual world, through whose wonderful mediumistic powers the grand fact of man's continuity of life after physical dissolution, and his ability, when the necessary conditions are present, to communicate with those still on the earthly plane of life, was first demonstrated without the possibility of doubt to the Editor hereof. Many years of earnest study and investigation have since confirmed his convictions, consequently he takes this opportunity of publicly acknowledging his great indebtedness and deep gratitude to one whose character was grossly maligned when here, by those who did not know him, and who, though now absent in the body, is still frequently present in spirit with his grateful friend,

HUGH JUNOR BROWNE.

Park House, Wellington Parade,
East Melbourne, Victoria, 1888.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

PREFACE.

To those who judge of a matter without having first investigated it, and whose prejudice forms a barrier to the reception of any newly-discovered truth which does not corroborate the views, scientific or religious, popularly entertained, the statements herein set forth will doubtless prove of little interest, unless it be for the purpose of holding them up to derision, or of casting ridicule on those who have acted more reasonably and philosophically in the matter than they have, by investigating first and judging afterwards. It is to the latter class only, who, like Goethe, desire "light, more light," that the contents of these pages are submitted for their consideration by one who, from educational bias, entered on the investigation of the subject herein treated of strongly opposed thereto, but whose better judgment led him to overcome his false prejudices, and to carefully and scientifically examine the phenomena connected therewith, notwithstanding the scorn and ridicule such an investigation was sure to entail.

To the thoughtless, a subject that is ridiculed must be ridiculous, but to those who hold that facts which are capable of being demonstrated, however opposed they may be to popular opinion, are the basis of true Science, Philosophy, and Religion, all the ridicule in the world, by those who are ignorant of and prejudiced against the subject, has not the slightest effect. Knowledge founded on personal investigation is unsusceptible to ridicule, it is only those whose beliefs rest merely on assumed authority who cannot stand the shaft of

Digitized by Google

ridicule; for, while knowledge is perfect conviction from evidence presented to our senses, belief is mere passive assent to authority or to the testimony of others. A man that has £10,000 to his credit at his bankers can afford to be called a pauper—"a shabby genteel" cannot. As it is, in the case of those who know the truth from actual demonstration, they can smile at ridicule, while those who believe irrational creeds, merely on an assumed authority, wince under it, because they err, not knowing the truth as it is in Nature, which is not confined to mundane but also embraces spiritual things. Nature being the manifestations of God, nothing can be above it, or supernatural, except its inscrutable Author—the great Evolver of all, whether mundane or super-mundane, physical or spiritual, Who is in all, through all, and above all, yet is invisible and incomprehensible to all, be they men, devils, or angels; for while they are finite, God is infinite, revealing Himself only through His works.

The truly philosophic inquirer divests himself of all prejudice, and excludes no opinion from his consideration on account of its antagonism to the views which he entertains. He wisely holds his opinions of to-day as but stepping-stones on which to rise to higher, nobler, and more correct views on the morrow; and, with the learned Sir Humphrey Davy, he candidly acknowledges that "facts are more useful when they contradict than when they support received theories." It is only the foolish, bigoted, narrow-minded, or cowardly, who obstinately refuse to give a calm and dispassionate consideration to opinions which are at variance with their own. All the decisions of prejudiced commissions, societies, or individuals in the world cannot affect demonstrable facts, though such decisions may be eagerly swallowed with zest by unreasoning and unreasonable opponents thereto, who are too indolent or too prejudiced to investigate the subject themselves to test the truth thereof. And as in the past the cruel persecution of

Digitized by Google

the Church failed to stay the promulgation of the fact that the Earth revolved round the Sun, so in the present day the gross misrepresentations of both Pulpit and Press, and the unprovable theories of Vicarious Sacrifice, Physical Resurrection, Annihilation, Reincarnation, Astral Shells, &c., are equally powerless to stay the onward march of Spiritual truths that are capable of being demonstrated when the necessary conditions are present. Let all, however, who are still opposed to the spiritual philosophy of the nineteenth century bear in mind that, as has been truly declared, "Facts are the basis of philosophy; philosophy the harmony of facts seen in their right relation," and that, as was said of old, "He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is a folly and shame unto him."

The Editor is aware that in portions of these lectures there is a want of consecutiveness, the thread of the discourse being broken by the introduction of matter foreign to that being treated of, and that in some cases there are repetitions of what has already been stated, thus laying them open to adverse criticism by those who only judge of writings from a literary standpoint. He, however, considers it better to publish them as received rather than present them in a different form to that in which they appear, by recasting them. Those for whose benefit these lectures are published, namely, earnest truth-seekers, care little about the style of communications, so long as they are not ambiguous or misleading, whereas in the eyes of the hypercritical, everything must be subservient to literary style and finish, of which these lectures are devoid. When the imperfect education of the instrument through which they were received, and the difficulties experienced by the lecturer, through adverse conditions, are taken into account, the wonder is that the lectures are as lucid and instructive as they are, imperfect though they be from a literary standpoint. Doubtless the material character of the

Digitized by Google

other world, as therein represented, will afford *material* for ridicule to the ignorant concerning the law of correspondences, and will shock the sensibilities of those who believe that their departed friends are flying about, like poultry, with wings, or reclining on damp clouds, or on airy cobwebs ; while they forget that in the Scriptures "Heaven" is represented as being of a most material nature, with cities whose streets are paved with gold, the walls of which have massive gates, and containing thrones, golden crowns, altars, horns, candlesticks, lamps, vials, swords, trumpets, harps, cymbals, palm-branches, doves, horses, lambs, dragons, and other monstrous animals, with six wings each, and full of eyes before and behind, &c. ; and the other division is depicted as being a vast burning lake of sulphur in its crude state, namely, brimstone. If the other world does not consist of some form of matter it must be immaterial, consequently it is non-existent, and our hopes are vain and delusive. Fortunately, in our Father's kingdom there are many mansions.

The Editor, possibly, may be accused of writing dogmatically, which he does not for an instant deny, but he holds that one, who for many years past has placed truth and duty before popularity and all else, with the time, means, and opportunities for testing the truth of the matter, and who writes that which he knows from personal investigation and from demonstrated facts, possesses the indubitable data which entitle him to write and speak dogmatically thereon. If an electrician or electrical scientist, from personal experience, declares that when certain substances are placed in conjunction with each other, and the atmospheric and other necessary conditions are present, certain effects will ensue, would the world hold him to be dogmatic? Then why deem the spiritual scientist dogmatic under similar circumstances? The Editor candidly admits his inferiority to many in the knowledge of the popular branches of science, but in spiritual, or the higher

Digitized by Google

branch of science, which he has made his specialty, he yields to none. Time will prove the truth of this, though now it may appear the height of arrogance. Notwithstanding this position he feels that he only knows the A B C of that higher science which will, in coming ages, revolutionise many of the popular theories regarding things both mundane and super-mundane, and eventually unite all in the grand search for spiritual truth, and in the bonds of brotherly love, peace, and happiness, instead of being as at the present time, divided into opposing sects and factions, the daily actions of which give the lie to their professions; hence the lamentable state of poverty, misery, and crime to be seen in our midst, notwithstanding the praiseworthy, benevolent efforts of the few to ameliorate this pitiable state of affairs. What else, however, can be expected, so long as the great majority are continually praying God to have mercy upon them, while they show little or no mercy on others, to whom they offer the stones of dogma in place of the bread of life—the Truth—not as this or that sect inculcates, but as recorded in the great Universe of God, including both the physical and spiritual, and as approved by the divine faculty of reason in man. May this change soon come about should be the earnest prayer, not in words, but by actions, of every true and honest heart that can feel for those less fortunate than themselves.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

INTRODUCTION.

It is but due to the readers of the following lectures that a full and candid explanation should be given of how they were obtained. For this purpose it may be mentioned that some fourteen years back, shortly after the Editor hereof (who by the way lays no claim to literary ability) had been thoroughly convinced by demonstration of the truth of spirit communion, first through the mediumship of Charles Henry Foster, and afterwards through that of several members of his own family; one of his employés, who is still in his service, informed him that there was an almost illiterate young man of the name of Harris, who was a good trance medium, living in a humble cottage not far from one of the business premises belonging to the Editor. On the latter calling at the cottage indicated, he was informed that Harris held circles twice a week which were open to the public at the small charge for admission of one shilling each. After being present at two or three of these circles, which were attended by an earnest but motley group of enquirers, the Editor invited the medium to give a seance at his residence. This he consented to do for the modest sum of ten shillings, but stipulated that his wife should accompany him, which was agreed to. His wife, it may be mentioned, had received rather a better education than her husband, and was a young woman of a quiet, modest disposition. It was while the medium was wood-splitting in "the bush" that he developed as a trance-speaker.

What appeared to the mind of the Editor, before he was convinced of the truth of Modern Spiritualism, as a proof of

Digitized by Google

the absurdity thereof, was that, as a rule, the communications received through mediums were mostly ascribed to some great person or notable individual when on earth, and as the leading control of Harris purported to be the spirit of a celebrated dramatist, one of his first enquiries, when Harris was entranced, was for an explanation of how the spirit of such a celebrated man came to be connected with so humble an individual as the medium. It would occupy too much space here to give the explanation vouchsafed *in extenso*, suffice it to say that it was quite satisfactory to the Editor, who is not usually credited with being one who is easily imposed on in the general affairs of life. It may, however, be mentioned that the leading control, as he was termed, stated that he did not know anything of the medium until a spirit known by the name of Robinson when on earth, (who had been instrumental in developing the medium as a trance speaker, and who, meeting the leading control and perceiving that he possessed the power of fluent speech), addressed him, stating that he, in conjunction with others, had developed a medium on earth, for whom they were desirous of obtaining one of considerable experience in mundane and spiritual matters, who would undertake to lecture through this medium. To which the leading control replied that he would be only too pleased to avail himself of the offer, having long had a great desire to meet with a developed medium through whose organisation he might give to the people of earth some of his experiences since entering spirit life, but that he had neither the patience nor the perseverance to undertake to develop a medium himself. He further stated that, before the occasion referred to, he was a perfect stranger to the medium's spirit guides (those who had developed him), and that at first he experienced considerable difficulty in speaking fluently through the medium, but that with a little practice he soon got complete control, not

Digitized by Google

only of his organs of speech, but also of his body generally, so that he could, when speaking through him, make his actions suit his words. The medium, it may be observed, appeared a very different individual when under control to what he did when in his normal state, not only in regard to his mode of speaking, but also in his bearing generally. In the one case, except that his eyes were firmly closed, he looked like a practised declaimer, both from the attitudes he assumed and the oratorical powers he displayed ; in the other he appeared a very mediocre individual, with a careless gait and plebeian address.

On inquiry how it was that the leading control, if he were the individual he purported to be, did not speak through the medium in verse as was his wont to write when on earth, he gave the two following reasons. The first was that though he possessed natural poetic tendencies, the poetry of which he had got the credit of being the author was principally the product of a band of poetic spirits whom he had met shortly after he entered spirit-life, and that he, when on earth, was merely a medium, through whom this band of spirits had given to the people of earth their verses, which he claimed, considering the variety and depth of the subjects therein treated of, were beyond the knowledge and power of any one man to indite. On the Editor mentioning that some people in the present day attributed the authorship of the writings bearing his name to Francis Bacon or Ben Jonson, he observed that, like all false theories, there was a modicum of truth therein, for not being able, from want of education, to correct a single stanza of the poems written through his hand, he used to submit his writings to either his friend Bacon or his friend Jonson to see if they were correct, before presenting them to public criticism. The control further stated that his younger days were spent in slaughtering sheep and delivering the meat to customers, and that often in those days his hand

Digitized by Google

would be controlled to write all over the skin of the sheep he had just skinned, but from not understanding, as many now do, about automatic writing, he placed no value on what had thus been written, consequently, he added, many plays probably equal to any written through him in after years, were in this way lost to the world. He also observed that the plays as now published are very different to what they were when first written through his hand, and that to any one of common sense it must be apparent that for one occupying so humble a position in life as he did, and possessed of so little opportunity for learning, as was the case with him when in youth, it was an utter impossibility that he, from his own knowledge, could have written the numerous plays bearing his name, comprising as they do such a variety of subjects. "The fact is," he added, "I had neither the requisite education in history and philosophy, nor the court experience to write them. Acting on the stage was more suited to my taste than the writing of plays." The Editor does not hold himself responsible for these statements; he simply records them as they were delivered through the medium.

For the information of those who are unacquainted with the subject, it may here be mentioned that it is not uncommon for mediums to write or speak on subjects and in languages of which they have no knowledge. Of this fact the Editor has had evidence in the case of several members of his own family, besides many others. A spiritual medium is simply one whose organism is more susceptible to spiritual influence than ordinary mortals, just as a sensitive is one who is more susceptible to the mesmerizer's control than the generality of people. The purer in mind, and the more highly the intellect of mediums is cultivated, so long as their will is passive, the better and higher, as a rule, will be the communications received through them. The cultivation of the intellect, however, frequently causes them to become less passive,

Digitized by Google

through the increase thereby of their power of will. Mediumship is simply the result of organisation, and, like all other natural gifts, it is not dependent on the moral character of the individual; hence we hear of fraudulent mediums, just as we read of drunken musicians, swindling painters, and immoral orators. "To err is human."

The second reason the control gave for not speaking through the medium in verse was that the medium's brain was not, as was his own when in the flesh, suitable to express poetry through it. On several occasions the Editor had even to suggest a different word to that spoken through the medium, in order to make the sentence intelligible, such, for instance, as "concentrated" in place of consecrated, and "parterre" instead of pasture. On inquiry if these were not the words intended to be expressed, the control's reply was "Yes, but I could not speak them through the medium, they not being in his vocabulary, so I took the nearest words in sound I could find, knowing that you would suggest the proper words to express my meaning." On the medium coming out of trance the Editor asked him if he understood the meaning of "concentrated," "parterre," &c, to which he answered "No, I never heard these words before;" but on asking him if he knew what "consecrated," "pasture," &c., meant, his reply was, "Oh yes, consecrated means made holy, and pasture means grazing land." These facts are mentioned to show how totally incapable the medium was to compose, far less to deliver impromptu the lectures herein given, which were spoken fluently through him when in an unconscious or trance state, and taken down as uttered by a shorthand writer employed for the purpose.

After several lectures on various subjects had been delivered through Harris at the Editor's residence, all of which proved to be very interesting, and some of which appear in "The Holy Truth" under the head of "The Spiritual

Digitized by Google

Philosophy," it was proposed by the leading control of the medium that a regular circle, consisting of six persons, whom he nominated, should be formed in order that he might deliver a course of lectures through the medium, describing his experiences and the real state of existence in spirit-life. This proposition was at once gladly acceded to, and the circle, which consisted of Mrs. Harriet Grace, Mr. Arthur Devlin, Junr.,* Mr. Richard Moorfield, the Editor, his wife, and the wife of the medium, met regularly twice a week for the purpose. These, with the medium and the shorthand writer, constituted, as a rule, all present in the body at these seances; but occasionally a member of the Editor's family or an earnest investigator was, with the control's permission, allowed to be present; the latter, however, on these occasions sat outside the circle. The member of the Editor's family referred to, at that time a child of eleven years of age, was a very fine clairvoyant, who used to describe minutely the controlling spirit, as he stood by the side of the entranced medium while speaking, and how the spirit-guides of the medium put him in the trance state, previous to his being controlled, by magnetic passes of their hands, just as a mesmerizer in the flesh puts his sensitives into the mesmeric sleep before exercising his power of will over them. All the seances were held in full gaslight, and were attended punctually by the members of the circle.

There are two or three other matters connected with these lectures that it may be as well here to mention. There were in all fifty lectures of this series delivered through the medium. Unfortunately, and much to the Editor's regret, two of them, namely, Nos. 4 and 5, are missing. The shorthand

* Both of these have since entered the higher life, and have, as far as in their power, corroborated the truth of many of the statements set forth in these lectures.

Digitized by Google

writer, who had taken down as uttered the first four lectures, had to leave Melbourne on business at a moment's notice before he had time to transcribe the fourth lecture, and although he promised faithfully to forward it as soon as he could find time to transcribe it, he failed to do so, and unfortunately the Editor omitted to obtain from him his address before he left. In the case of lecture No. 5 the shorthand writer engaged, though professing to be proficient, proved to be quite incapable of keeping pace with the lecturer. When pressed to transcribe what he had taken down, he had to admit that it all consisted of broken sentences which he was quite unable to complete. The lectures varied in length according to the conditions present at each seance. The more favourable the conditions the longer was the medium under control, and the better the lectures delivered. On several occasions that the circle met, owing to the state of the medium's health, or to electrical disturbances in the atmosphere, the medium was not controlled, consequently these seances had to be adjourned without obtaining any results.

Before delivering the last of these lectures the controlling spirit mentioned to the Editor that he did not consider it advisable to publish them for some years to come, as the world was not then ready to appreciate them, but he stated that the Editor was to use his discretion as to the time when he should have them published. This he does not by any means consider has as yet arrived, but as he is getting on in years, and his eyesight is beginning to fail, he is anxious to see these lectures in print before he leaves the physical plane of life for a higher sphere of existence. He has, therefore, resolved to place them in the printer's hands, in the hope that, ere a few years elapse, the world, through the marvellous spiritual manifestations now taking place in various parts of the globe, and from other causes, will be forced into a position which will compel them to appreciate and welcome all information

Digitized by Google

regarding the real state of existence in that higher domain of Nature towards which all, *nolens volens*, are tending.

At the express desire of the controlling spirit the Editor has refrained from mentioning on the title page the name of the dramatist whose experiences in spirit-life are herein given, though, from remarks already made, as well as several in the lectures themselves, little doubt will be felt by the reader who the controlling spirit purported to be. The reason given for not wishing his name to appear on the title page of these lectures was that, as a rule, people are too much led away by the authority claimed for a book, instead of judging each statement set forth therein on its intrinsic merits, and receiving or rejecting as their reason approves of or condemns it. The poet Pope truly wrote :—

> "Some judge of authors' names, not works, and then
> Nor praise nor blame the writings, but the men."

If the reader will turn up Cassell's Biographical Dictionary for the name of Heinecken, Christian Heinrich, he will there find recorded a case of mediumship, long before the advent of what is termed Modern Spiritualism, which puts into the shade that of the celebrated dramatist herein referred to. It is there stated that Heinecker "was able to talk when ten months old. At the mature age of one year he was well versed in the Mosaic history; one month afterwards knew the history of the Old Testament, and when fourteen months old was thoroughly acquainted with that of the new." He died *at four years of age.* Yet it is recorded of him that "ancient history and geography, anatomy and geology, divinity, historical and doctrinal, Latin and arithmetic, appear to have been learned with such rapidity that he might have had written on his tomb, *veni, vidi, vici!* Before the King of Denmark he delivered twelve speeches, without a single falter, and passed a good examination in the history of

Digitized by Google

Denmark, in German, Latin, French, and Low Dutch." Then, if the reader desires an explanation of these wonderful performances by a child only four years of age, who has a biography, he will find it at page 522 of "Essays from the Unseen," by Judge Peterson, London, 1885, where it states that the body of this mere infant was controlled by the spirit of one who had lived on earth sixty-seven years, and who, when on earth, was proficient in learning. Doubtless Mozart's case was something of a similar character, for at eight years of age it is recorded he was known as an able composer and performer, and before he was fourteen a complete opera was written through his hand. In confirmation of this see also Cassell's Biographical Dictionary. Truly there are more marvellous things in Nature than are dreamt of by philosophers of the popular class, but gradually the old order of things changeth to make way for the new.

"Earth is waking—day is breaking!
Fellow-toiler bend thine ear:
Hear ye not the angels speaking
Words of love and words of cheer?"

The following are extracts from a communication from the same control, but received through a different medium to the one through whom these lectures were delivered:—

"Who am I? That is a question which may be passing through your mind. It has been a troublesome and vexatious question with many, and all about a man who reached a pinnacle of fame. . . . To me it seems as much a wonder that my name should have been rendered immortal as it does to others. If I had received special advantages in any extraordinary education, I should perhaps have been brought to think that these advantages were the cause of my fame; but, in starting in life I did not possess the advantages of a classical education. My knowledge of the ancients was absolutely *nil*, and of the Latin tongue the extent of my knowledge abides with me just as plainly now as it did when

Digitized by Google

I left the free grammar school of Stratford-on-Avon, to which I went for education—not where I was educated. I remember wading through the substantives in the Latin grammar. I remember *musa*, a song; *gladius*, a sword: *magister*, a master. Then there is the pronoun, *hic*, *hæc*, *hoc*, genitive *hujus*. I remember that well. I got on as far as *amo*, *amas*, *moneo*, *audio*, the auxiliary verb being preliminary, *sum*, *es*, *est*, *sumus*. There commenced and there ended my knowledge of the ancients. I got on just as well without it." In answer to a question the control replied:—"I was spiritually controlled undoubtedly; I was never myself either in acting or writing." "Biographers kindly say I came up (to London) in poverty. They say I acted as waiter to the Blackfriars' Theatre—horsekeeper outside—and that the cry resounded night after night, 'Where is Will Shakespeare, to hold my horse till after the performance?' What is stranger to me than this biographical notice is its general acceptance. I had written my "Venus and Adonis," and also several other minor pieces that were known only among a select circle of friends (before coming to London). Amongst my friends was one, by name Burbage. He was of the same county, and was one of the shareholders of the Blackfriars' Theatre. He, knowing that I was an original writer and a tolerably good hand at mimicry in revels, invited me to town, having heard of the prosecution (for poaching), and I accepted his invitation. . . . Every word of "King Lear" I wrote, hearing the words clairaudiently. The "Merry Wives of Windsor" was written through my hand in nearly illegible characters. I had been with Drayton and Ben Jonson, having a social glass together, and after a carousal, for it finished with one, I stopped at the inn where it took place, and filled twenty-four sheets of manuscript between 2 a.m. and 4.35. This was the "Merry Wives of Windsor." . . . I was thoroughly controlled

Digitized by Google

when I wrote, and when any one came in at any time before I was restored to consciousness, they would be struck, and pass remarks about my want of attentiveness; they would charge me with an absence of consciousness. I put it all down to meditativeness; I knew it was something beyond myself, but I dared not mention it. I was always deemed eccentric. I was right royal in my friendships, and contentious or indifferent to those for whom I felt no partiality; in fact I was a man of extremes, a sensitive, a term which embraces all the eccentricities of a soul tabernacled in clay. . . . After a successful life upon earth I had a happy transition, and a welcome reception in the spirit spheres."

LIFE.

A poem by the same control, received through the mediumship of Miss Lizzie Doten :—

"To be, or not to be," is not "the question;"
There is no choice of Life. Ay, mark it well!—
For Death is but another name for Change.
The weary shuffle off their mortal coil,
And think to slumber in eternal night.
But, lo! the man, though dead, is living still;
Unclothed, is clothed upon, and his mortality
Is swallowed up of Life.

"He babbles o' green fields, then falls asleep,"
And straight awakes amid eternal verdure.
Fairer than "Dreams of a Midsummer's Night,"
The fields Elysian stretch before him.
No "Tempest" rends the ever peaceful bowers
Of asphodel, and fadeless amaranth!
No hot sirocco blows with poisonous breath;
No midnight frights him with its goblins grim,
Presaging sudden death. No Macbeth there,
Mad with ambition, plotteth damning deeds;
No Hamlet, haunted by his father's ghost,
Stalks wildly forth intent on vengeance dire.
The curse of Cain on earth is consummate,
It knows no resurrection. Spirits learn
That spirit is immortal, and no poisoned cup,
Or dagger's thrust, or sting of deadly asp,
Can rob it of its God-like attribute.
This mortal garb may be as full of wounds
And bloody rents as royal Cæsar's mantle;
Yet that which made it man or Cæsar liveth still.

Digitized by Google

Man learns, in this Valhalla of his soul,
To love, nor ever finds "Love's Labor Lost."
No two-faced Falstaff proffers double suit;
No Desdemona mourns Iago's art;
And every Romeo finds his Juliet.
The stroke of Death is but a kindly frost,
Which cracks the shell, and leaves the kernel room
To germinate. What consummate fools
This dread of death doth make us! Reason plays
The craven unto sense, and in his fear
Chooses the slow and slavish death of life,
Rather than freedom in the life of death.
"Thus *Ignorance* makes cowards of us all."
And blinds us to our beings best estate.
Madly we cling to life through nameless ills,
Pinched by necessity, and scourged by fate,
Fainting in heat and freezing in the cold,
While war, and pestilence, and sore distress,
Fever and famine, fire and flood, combine
To drive the spirit from its wreck of clay.

O, poor Humanity! How full of blots,
And stains, and pains, and miseries thou art!
Here let me be thine Antony, and plead
Thy cause against the slayers of thy peace.
Though wounded, yet thou art not dead, thou child
Of Immortality—thou heir of God!
He who would slay thee, be he brute or Brutus,
Plunges the dagger in his own vile heart.
And yet thy wounds are piteous. I could weep
That aught so fair from the Creator's hand
Should be so marred and mangled, like a lamb
Torn by the ravening wolves. Here let me take
Thy mantle, pierced with gaping, ghastly wounds,
From daggers clutched by ingrate hands. O Truth!
How many, in thy sacred name, have slain
Humanity, thinking they did God service.
Rome, and not Cæsar—Doctrines, and not Men.

I cannot count the wounds which lust for power,
And wealth, and place, and precedence have made.
But, O! the keenest, deepest, deadliest stabs
Of all, were made by false Philosophy
And false Theology combined—
Philosophy, that knew not what it did;
Theology, that did not what it knew.
See here! That rent made by the fear of God,
That gracious God, whose "mercy seasons justice,"
Who feeds the raven, clothes the lilies, heeds
The sparrow when it falls, and sends His rain
Alike upon the evil and the good.
And yet they were all "honorable men"
Who taught this doctrine—*honorable men!*
Whose failing was a lack of common sense.

Digitized by Google

And lo, here is another—Fear of Truth—
Blind superstition made this horrid rent,
And Bigotry quick followed up the thrust.
O! 'tis an eye weeping great tears of blood!
An eagle eye, that dared to love the light
Which Bigotry and Superstition feared.
Lest it should make their deeds of evil plain.
Thus is it, he who dares to see a truth
Not recognised in creeds must die the death.
But noonday never stayed for bats and owls,
And Truth's clear light *shall yet* arise and shine.

See here: another wound—The dread of Death—
That blessed consummation of earth-life,
Which soothes all pain, makes good all loss, revives
The weak, gives rest and peace, makes free the slave,
Levels all past distinctions, and doth place
The beggar on a footing with the king.
O, poor Humanity! those who conspired
To slay thee, through exceeding love for God,
And for the glory of His mighty name,
Smote at the very centre of thy peace,
And damning doubts, like daggers' thrust, attest
How zealously they aimed each cruel blow.

And yet, this rent and bloody mantle is not thee!
Slain, but not dead—thy spirit shall arise
And face thy startled enemies again,
As Royal Cæsar's ghost appeared to Brutus
In Sardi's and Philippi's tented plains.
Thou royal heir to kingdoms yet unknown!
A mightier than Cæsar is thy Friend.
He stays the hand of Cassius, Brutus, all
Who aim their weapons at thy life, and dulls
Their daggers' points against thy deathless soul.
From every gaping wound of fear or doubt,
Murder or malice, sorrow or despair,
Thy spirit leaps as from a prison door.
It laughs at death and daggers, as it flies
To hold companionship with spirits blest:
And having thus informed itself of life,
The question then,—"To be, or not to be,"
Is swallowed up in Immortality.

Then, sweet Humanity, thou favoured child
Of God, look up! An everlasting chain
Doth bind thee to the mighty heart of all.
Love's labour never can be lost. He who
Created, shall, through Love, perfect and save;
And that which hath such poor expression here,
Shall find fruition in a brighter sphere.

Digitized by Google

Note.—The net profits, if any, derived from the sale of this first edition—price, 7s. 6d. per copy—the Editor undertakes shall be handed to the family of the medium through whom these lectures were delivered, who are in indigent circumstances. All who are interested in the subject herein treated of are respectfully requested to call the attention of their friends to this book.—Ed.

Digitized by Google

THE GRAND REALITY

BEING

Experiences in Spirit Life of a celebrated Dramatist.

LECTURE I.

Delivered at Park House, Wellington Parade, East Melbourne, Victoria,

ON THE EVENING OF 4TH DECEMBER, 1874.

GOOD EVENING. Before entering upon the matter upon which I wish to speak, I shall make a few prefatory remarks. In the first place I feel sure that I need waste no words with my listeners for the purpose of impressing them with the solemnity with which the subject should be approached, for I am certain that each of them will give their earnest attention to what I have to say.

Digitized by Google

they may know that which, otherwise, would seem strange to them,—that they may understand that which no church, no fixed system of religion, and no priestly doctrines have been able to cast light upon.

It is a most easy thing to dismiss the subject from the mind, as, perhaps, too many will; but these lectures I recommend to those who really wish to try and learn something of the life to come,—something of the path that sooner or later they must tread,—a path which has been so benighted, so darkened, and so misrepresented, but which, I earnestly hope, may be so illumined in the future as to show plainly to all seekers that they can tread upon something sound, and which will, in later times, bring them to the eternal flood of light.

I wish also, in dictating these lectures, to try and refrain from hurting the feelings of those who are of different thoughts and opinions on this subject, my great desire being to strengthen those who are inclined to investigate it and to learn the grand and everlasting truths thereof.

At the present time man, as a rule, walks between two hedges, and the road is dark and dreary; he can see no end to the journey. But that he may, to a certain extent, see the end thereof; that the curtain placed before his eyes and his senses may be withdrawn a little, and "death" looked upon in a more placid manner, and viewed as a mere changed form of matter, I this evening gladly initiate this lecture,—as the first of a series,—with the fervent expression that, when my pleasing task is finished it will have afforded pleasure and satisfaction to those I see before me, as well as, eventually, prove an incentive to many to lead a better life here, which is but the precinct of the Life Eternal.

I shall not bring my listeners to my death; but I will call their attention to that period when I first came to know that I still lived, and to realize that I had the spiritual vision and was in the spiritual frame.

Digitized by Google

For some time after my death, I was in what you might term a sleep,—a sleep which, owing to my ignorance, (with all its darkness clinging around me with a tenacious hold), I could not, for some time, shake off. When awakening and coming to my senses, I found what you would call a strong magnetic light striking upon the base of my head, which seemed to vibrate through me and bring into existence the whole of my spiritual faculties. I found myself lying on a couch or sofa (yes, a veritable couch, though not composed of physical matter),* and, on looking round, I saw near me many whom I had known upon earth, and who had passed on before me. I recognised many faces with which I had been perfectly familiar,—those who had often cheered me,—those who had made the hours of dreariness pass by with pleasure, and it was with unbounded delight that I looked upon their well remembered forms.

I awoke, as it seemed to me, from a dream, and it was some time before I could thoroughly realize that I had passed through the much dreaded change termed "death;" for I found everything so natural, and so much resembling what I had been accustomed to upon earth. I had fully expected when awakening in what you term "the other world," to have found greater and more wondrous changes than I then beheld. I put my hand out to try if I could really grasp something firm, something that I could touch. I touched my spiritual body and found it was as firm and perceptible to my spiritual touch as my earthly body was to my physical senses. I moved my fingers and found that they vibrated at my will with just the same action as they did when upon earth. I found also that by exercising my will-power I could move, and move I did. When I arose I beheld myself in a purer and finer state

---

NOTE.—This was in response to an exclamation by one of the members of the circle, "a couch!"

Digitized by Google

than I had ever possessed before. I turned round to those friends who were around me and asked: "Am I really dead? or is this a dream which has caused an illusion and taken my earthly eyesight for a time? Yet I know that you passed away before me. You, friends, stand here arrayed in the garb of truth, of beauty, and of light." To the many questions I asked, answers to the following effect were given me: "Yes, you have passed through the change termed 'death,' or what might more appropriately be designated a transformation for the better. The place, or the abode you are now living in is a locality in one of the Spiritual Spheres. You have a great deal to learn, friend. You came here with darkness surrounding you; you have much to cleanse yourself of; and you have very many wondrous sights to behold." Even then I could not realise my position until one of them, who seemed to have a power of will over my spiritual form, awakened me to what appeared a wider and more expanded vision, and suddenly my eyesight opened up to scenes which launched me far away. I beheld worlds which, even had I given a thought to such a subject, my imagination could not have pictured as glowing with such beauty and perfection as I then beheld. I gasped for breath, for my spiritual nerves and my spiritual body being weak, I could not bear with equanimity such a sight as I then saw. I observed thousands of spirits who appeared to be moving in different directions, and who were clothed in a more refulgent light than I had yet beheld. All that had seemed so beautiful and precious to me on earth, appeared now no longer that which could captivate my eyesight. I wished then and there to utilize the power of will which I found floating through me. I wished then and there to have put it into action, and to have sailed or walked over the enchanting plains and spheres which I had beheld. A new light seemed suddenly to dawn upon my understanding, and my emotions were heightened as I felt how greatly I had

Digitized by Google

misconceived Deity when upon earth. How stolidly I had clothed Him in those attributes which I now knew to be impious towards that Infinite Being. I felt then most acutely how utterly disregardful I had been of the voice of reason within me. I saw the whole of what I should not have been, brought into light at once before me. I saw those things which I ought not to have done, flash before me like the gleaming sheet of lightning across your sky. The loud rumbling and reverberating thunder could not bring to your minds the inward pricking of conscience I then felt. I saw those whom I had injured when on earth; those upon whom I had inflicted injuries which would demand retributive justice, stand up before me, and I wept more tears,—yes, I believe more tears than I had shed during the whole of my sojourn upon earth.

After having recovered from the vehemence of passion which so agitated me, I felt a strong desire to penetrate those spheres of Nature which I had beheld, but I found I was under restraint by a tie that kept me from going beyond a certain distance, and I was gently taken back to where I started from and told that I was not yet strong enough,—that the time had not come for me to travel over those domains. I then fell into a passive sleep, induced, as I subsequently ascertained, by the movements of the hands of some of those around me, or by magnetic passes, as you would term them.

After awakening the second time I found a strength which had apparently grown in my spiritual body, and I then asked those who were with me if I could now visit those enchanting scenes which I had beheld. Simultaneously an inward, burning desire seemed to seize me to try and tear away at once the wrongs I had committed upon earth, and thereby cleanse myself to that state of purity which would qualify me to become an inhabitant of those brighter spheres. But I was told that I was only in the second grade of the second sphere.

Digitized by Google

"The second grade of the second sphere! And how many spheres are there?" "There are several, all culminating in the celestial plane or sphere of glory, the physical being the first or rudimentary sphere." And is each one more beautiful, finer, and purer than this?" "Yes, but wait," said my guide. "I will take and show you many haunts of this sphere which bear a very different aspect. All is happiness here while your spirit is enabled to make it so, but so long as you retain those glaring thoughts which I perceive becloud your nature, you cannot be happy." "True, I said, "I have, indeed, felt the pain of anguish and remorse chasing through my spiritual form. I have, indeed, experienced something akin to the agonies of fire burn within my soul. Oh! show me the path by which I can undo the wrongs that I have done; only show me the way and I shall do my best to try and succeed." "Stay," he said, "not so fast, time hath its cure for all things. There are no such sudden changes from extremes in Nature; she does not work so quickly. The laws you have transgressed cannot be placated all at once. There is only one cure,—one road through which you can possibly undo that which so weighs you down,—and that is TIME." "Shall I, then," I asked, "have again to suffer as I have suffered now?" "Yes, and far more. Here you are only in one of the lower spheres; wait until you are surrounded by the higher spirits, and then, indeed, you will find, more so than now, the impurities which, in accordance with the just and immutable law of cause and effect, still cling to you."

I really felt as if I could have sunk out of sight, for I perceived, intuitively, that those around me could read my thoughts and see every action I had done during my career upon earth. "Is there no judgment-day? Is there no repentance by which I can cast off at once the wrongs that I have committed, as they taught me in the world I have left?" "None. You must work your own course out; and it is a

Digitized by Google

long and difficult one, but the longer and more difficult it is the greater pleasure it will afford you when you have succeeded. But come with us and we will show you many paths of this sphere which you will not call beautiful."

I was then led forth by four of the brightest spirits that I had seen near me They seemed to take and waft me over space, for though I appeared to walk yet no exertion on my part was necessary, still the motion was rapid. As we passed along they pointed out to me paths, or, what would be termed by you, streaks of magnetism, leading in various directions, for there are numerous planes in each sphere. Presently we came to the first grade, where I beheld some of those who had committed heinous crimes against the laws of Nature,—such as murderers, suicides, and many of the lowest of the low that frequent the dens of your cities. I saw that the vilest passions had still possession of them; that all the horrid vices of the emotions or desires urged them on even here. I saw the murderer of the noble and the good, I saw the persecutor of the humble and the poor biting—aye, biting—with vengeance his spiritual fingers. I could read into his soul and there see the consuming fire of avarice. I saw there, branded on the brow, him who had waylaid a sister and brought her to ruin when upon earth. I could hear the cries of others, cries so replete with anguish, as to make the scene far more agonising than any upon your sphere. Their mental suffering appeared to goad the unfortunates to distraction. I have seen the murderer writhe and wreathe, twist and distort his spiritual form as if he were upon spikes. I have seen him bite the very dust to think of that which he had done and that which he could not undo, for the just and unerring laws of Nature demand that the wrong-doer should suffer. Amongst them I saw those who thought that they were forgiven, and who had passed away trusting in the misleading teaching of the religion which they professed, but who found that they were just the

Digitized by Google

same as they were when upon earth, only under altered conditions, and consequently were exposed to the spite and the taunts of the spirits of the lower grades, for such delight to taunt—yes, taunt—other spirits with those wrongs and crimes which lie heavy upon them.

Turning to my guides I asked them to explain this to me, and I enquired if this was the hell I had heard of when on earth. "No," was the reply. "Then, how is it that these spirits suffer so much?" "Because they have before them the sight of their victims whom they injured. Their sufferings, however, are inward, not outward. Neither do they for a moment think that they are to be burnt, but they feel the consuming flame of those passions which they cultivated when upon earth. It seems to eat into their spirit-forms as a disease does into the flesh." "Oh! Is there no cure; is there no way; is there no light; is there not a spark of hope for these?" "Yes, friend, time, as I told you before, will show them the path; but not until Nature's laws are requited; not until they have thrown those blemishes aside can they rise higher, can they pass away from the wickedness they have around them, for they have brought it with them."

Being animated by a desire to gain more information direct from those unhappy spirits about their suffering, I went to one who had committed murder upon earth, and asked him what he thought of spiritual existence. He replied that he liked it; for, said he, "there is not the wild chase here for the means of subsistence that there was on earth." "Then you do not always suffer in the manner I saw you not long since?" "No; but when my thoughts revert, as they frequently do in spite of me, to that matter, then I feel the burning, burning influence." "Can you at will," I asked, "throw off this influence?" "No, for directly it comes to the earthly time—to the hour in which I did the deed and took life away—the terrible, the dreadful influences of the time in which I did it,

Digitized by Google

return to me, and had I it in my power I think I would do even as do those foolish ones of earth who are weary of life. Yes, at these times, if it lay in my power—my spiritual power—I think I would commit suicide, for there is no way for us to throw those feelings off—none." "Aye?" said I: "So you cannot commit suicide here?" "No!" "Then why do you not try and reach the ladder of happiness by endeavouring to better your condition?" "Because I do not feel inclined; for, excepting the suffering which you witnessed, I have everything here I want. I am in the company that I desire, and am jovial at times. Sometimes I return to earth and have jollifications; but at certain times I am drawn to this particular spot by an influence which I cannot withstand, which I cannot repel; and this, I suppose, is my punishment."

I then passed farther on. I was taken or led by the hand to what seemed a large city, which appeared to become brighter as we drew near to it; and yet there seemed to be a cloud or dark emanation hanging around it. I said to my guide, "What is that which we are approaching?" He told me to wait—that I must learn for myself all these things I was then beholding. In my eagerness to know I asked him innocently, "Is this Heaven?" "Heaven! No, my friend, this is only a place where many tarry until they are purified to enter the path, and are shown the way by which they can climb higher." "Thank you," I said. I could not help but feel in my heart that I had never in all my experience beheld such a city as was then before me. We drew near to it by what appeared groves. I observed that the vegetation, the flowers, and everything else presented a natural aspect, but in a higher state and more perfect degree than on the planet I had not long since bidden adieu to.

I wished to stop to examine these spots, but my guide told me I must pass on quickly. We approached what appeared to be gates to the wall which surrounded the whole of the

Digitized by Google

town. Judging by the appearances of the houses they seemed to have been built with hands. They were of beautiful architectural design, and formed with great skill. All of them were erected upon the Gothic principle, and constructed of matter very much resembling the materials which are used for building in your world, but of a much finer quality. Within these gates I saw thousands of spirits, and as my guide drew up before them he shone forth in light and said "open." The gates were instantly opened, and I was admitted into the presence of many, very many, venerable spirits who had lived upon earth before my time. They spoke to me, saying, "Brother, what want you here?" My guide, seeing my confusion, through being thrown into company such as I had never met before, spoke for me. Addressing them he said: "Brothers, we have brought you here a spirit who, while upon earth, appeared great in his own estimation. His peculiar qualities in this respect require to be cast away by him; we leave him here under your control, and under your powers; deal with him kindly, and see if you cannot take from him that which is rough, and put a finer coating on him." As these words were uttered, or, rather thoughts spoken, there seemed to rise from the whole of the town a band of choral music, imparting to my sense of hearing a most exquisite pleasure. It resembled ten thousand voices joined together in perfect harmony and concord, rendering the most delicious music, sparkling with melody and tune, also bringing with it such a delightful feeling that it seemed to sweep over me as does a cool breeze with you when the atmosphere has been hot and close. My heart throbbed —my brain vibrated—the spiritual principle within me seemed to expand. I could not speak, but my mouth gave forth in action, though not in words. Just then I was accosted thus: "Ah! you are a stranger to these scenes: when you have lived as long as we have in this sphere,

Digitized by Google

you will then understand the Divine spark that groweth in everything."

With the force of the body which I possessed upon earth I had a similar force of the spirit, and I there and then vowed determinedly that these secrets I would investigate; that I would penetrate and find them out, and if there were such a thing as a path that I could tread, no matter how deep, how dark, how precipitous the obstacle to be scaled, or how high it would be to climb, I would indeed return to earth and show its inhabitants what I had learned and what I had seen.

After thus deliberating, I was taken by the hand and led forward along a street leading to a large temple. This temple was not built in the same manner as your churches or chapels. It was erected in a circular form, and appeared to me to be perfectly round. Its walls were carried to a great height, surrounding which there was a verandah, supported by dark looking columns. These I found to be of substantial stone composed of spiritual matter; that is, substantial to the spiritual senses, just as rocks are substantial to your physical sense of touch.

On drawing up to the doors of this place they instantly opened, and as I stepped inside I saw that there was a gathering of various grades of spirits. There were some pure, beautiful, and bright that particularly attracted my attention. These I shall dwell upon at some future time. Each of the brighter spirits seemed to send out a light that illumined the whole of this vast building. (At a rough estimate there must have been between fifty and eighty thousand spirits assembled in this temple.) The more venerable of them appeared to wear the most patient and passive looks, from which you could inhale, as it were, softness. You seemed to gather strength from the words they uttered, for they were spoken in such beautiful, quiet language as to instil into your mind a hope, and into your spiritual body a comfort, inspiring you with a

Digitized by Google

confidence that you were in the society of those who would do you good.

As I wondered how it was that the light, which emanated from the purer spirits, was of such varying hues and characters, an old sage near me remarked: "These bright spirits from whom the various lights proceed come from all parts of the spheres. They meet here at certain times to undertake the elevation of the lower spirits. If you will but look behind you, you will see some of the faces that you saw in the first grade of this sphere." Turning round, as suggested, I recognised many of those whom I had observed suffering previous to my coming to this city, and I perceived that their countenances were more cheerful and that their magnetism, or aura, was lighter and brighter than when I saw them before. I enquired from the old sage how this was, and he said: "Each of these spirits is under the guidance of one of the higher ones, who bring them here to see if they cannot point out to them a path that they may tread, and mark out for them a course, an adherence to which will benefit them." I turned round to him and asked, "Am I so good that I have none of the suffering pertaining to these spirits to undergo?" "Wait, friend," he replied, "you are only now being made aware of your spiritual existence. Your spiritual nature is not highly developed, as you can perceive. You are only a little above those who are sitting behind you." I then felt ashamed indeed at the mistake which my self-esteem had caused me to make.

Suddenly, striking again on what seemed to be harps, the whole assembly burst forth into harmonious song. I could hear the echoes thereof as they passed away into space, and a thousand voices answering back, imparting and making known to me, in a manner beyond description, unconceived powers of strength. All at once my self-reliance deserted me. I seemed to lose it all in utter nothingness. I felt as if I were unknown, unwanted, and uncared for. When this latter feeling came

Digitized by Google

over me I cried, "What can I do? Whose guidance am I under? Have I, indeed, to suffer in a similar manner to those whose mental agony I so lately witnessed?" The old sage, addressing me, said: "This meeting is to bring you together *en rapport* with each other, and to make those, who are not inclined to walk the path of progress, susceptible to the influence of goodness and purity which emanates from others."

When the meeting broke up I passed away from the building among the numbers who emerged from it. On getting outside I again felt the impulse of reliance return to me, and I vowed that I would traverse the whole of these spheres inch by inch, foot by foot, yard by yard—by your earthly measurement—till I had searched them inside and out,—till I had turned their remotest corners,—until I had a thorough understanding, a thorough confidence to say, I know them. And I have, for there is not one corner that I have not visited, but I find there are more things in them than I can ever possibly learn.

To return, however, to my subject. Among the crowd of spirits who were passing out I met one whom I had known upon earth, who was kind-hearted and jovial; but there are many in this community who would not boast of him as being a man whose acquaintance they would cultivate. He accosted me in his old jocular manner. Taking me by the hand he said—"Friend, you seem to have an existence here that you do not enjoy. Come with me and I will show you the bright side of things. Some of your friends have been showing you the dark. Come with me to my home, it is among the mountains. There we can talk of Nature,—there we can hear her sweet strains,—there we can see her in her chaste robes and view her in a manner that you have never before conceived." "But, first of all," I said, "begin by taking me over every part of this vast and mighty town." I was taken

Digitized by Google

through it from one house to another. All of them appeared to be substantially constructed. It was here that I first learnt that the mere contact of one spirit with another imparted the faculty of reading each other's thoughts, and that when once spirits become *en rapport* this power of thought-reading remains as a permanent endowment. As we passed along my friend showed me everything I desired, and explained them with great particularity.

After leaving the town I observed that there were many paths, diverging right and left, and that some of them were broader than others. On coming to one of these my friend said—"This leads to such and such a place. If you wish to go I will take you; but I must first make you acquainted with these paths, so that you may not go astray." In a similar manner to that in which you teach a child to walk was I taught the mystery of, and instructed how to traverse, those diverging roads; as when a boy in my native place I had been taught how to perambulate my then circumscribed sphere of travail, so now, in my spiritual childhood was I taught how to journey in this, my more extended sphere. On looking at the vast expanse of space before me, the many beautiful scenes, and the almost innumerable winding paths leading in all directions, I felt that I was incompetent to either find my way among such a multiplicity of diverging tracks, or bring them in any state into my mind that I could grasp them. Here is the beauty of Spiritualism; here is the benefit of a knowledge of it. You are not launched into the "other world" in darkness or total ignorance regarding it; you have to a certain extent gained information which will give you some idea how to conduct yourself, and which will enable you to anticipate what you will experience on entering spirit-life.

Owing to my ignorance on entrance, I was too eager—too greedy to know everything off-hand. "Steady, my friend,"

Digitized by Google

said my old acquaintance, "you wish to grasp at once what will take you as long as you lived upon earth to acquire. You wish to know everything all at once. Do you not see that you are like a child with a new toy? As soon as he gets it he wishes to get at the inside of it to see what moves it,—to discover what stirs it,—or to know what makes the noise in it. It is the same with you, for you desire to gain all at once what you must patiently study to obtain,—that is knowledge. I can only show you the path that leads thereto. Knowledge and education cannot be instilled into you here suddenly, any more than they can be on earth. Here, as on the physical plane, there is no royal road to knowledge."

"Forward," said my friend, and with an overwhelming rush we seemed to pass through the air, and looking up I beheld, for the first time, what appeared to be a sky adorned with planets of greater size and extent than are those which are seen from your stand point. I asked him—"Is it the same sky we were in the habit of viewing when upon Earth?" "No, friend," was his reply. "Then from whence do we get the light, this beautiful soft light which, yet at times seems hard?" "The light, or air, as you would term it," he said, "is soft because you now breath or inhale it with purity, and do not send off an antagonistic influence against it; but when your body—your spiritual body—is oppressed, it seems hard, owing to your not being, for the time, in harmony with your surroundings."

We traversed, or appeared to sail, in close proximity to a deep precipice, without having any fear of a false step or of falling. We next seemed to glide along over hills and dales, which were dressed in the richest of colours. I observed a stream of more than crystal brilliancy coming down a mountain, and I said, "Friend, what is that?" "That is what you would call water." And I remarked, "How strange! How wondrous strange." Presently we paused

Digitized by Google

upon what appeared a height of unspeakable dimensions. "Tarry, look here," said my friend; and as I looked I saw, with one sweep, the country or plane we had passed over. "And is all like this?" I inquired. "Oh! no, friend; as we proceed I will give you a glimpse of what lies beyond," he said.

I really felt so comfortable and so delighted then, as I looked at Nature in her pure array, that I thought I could ever have stood and watched the bubbling, sparkling stream, and the beautiful colours that adorned the hills, which seemed to have absolutely no ending. No dark clouds were there to deface the scene. On a higher position being gained the sight of the planets overhead was grand in the extreme. Imagine a universe studded with brilliant gems larger—aye, larger—than your sun! As I gazed in amazement I could perceive these planets were revolving with an unerring precision and inconceivable rapidity. Whilst I looked I said, "Cannot we get closer?" for I felt a desire to get nearer to learn the mystery which surrounded them. My friend, addressing me, said, "I have brought you to this spot so that you might have a view of that which you think beautiful, but I will take you a little farther on to what seems like a border, and there you will be enabled to get a glimpse of a different but even grander sight."

Forward we went. Before doing so, however, I vowed that I would return to take a note of all I saw, and remember it, so as to see if, at some future day, or when the proper time arrived, I could not convey a description thereof to earth's inhabitants. Onward we went, or rather sailed, for to describe the spiritual movement is difficult. At last we stopped, and I then beheld innumerable paths—thousands of them (to use your words), all leading into one grand centre. Suddenly I felt within me a quivering sensation, as if I had come near to something I had no right to approach. "Look," said my friend, "through your spiritual glance as far as you

Digitized by Google

can." I did, and what did I behold? I beheld what is called another sphere. I could just see the border of a far distant plane. "Can I not walk over to it?" I asked. "No, friend; when you were upon earth you could not walk on water, neither can you walk there—try." I put my foot forward, but found myself drawn back by an irresistible force or attraction, and there I was impelled to stop. Looking intently again I saw gems which exhaled an indescribable brilliancy on thousands of spirits, who almost immediately vanished out of my sight. I had not the power to communicate with them, because the influence of my grade would not permit it.

My friend again reminded me that I was too impetuous—that I was desirous of grasping too much all at once—and was unwilling to adopt the more rational course, namely, patient research. From what I had been taught when upon earth I thought that I could grasp the reality instantaneously—that I should at once ascend to the throne, and there see Deity seated thereon—that I would in an instant be washed and be made white as snow—and that I could at one sweep behold and comprehend the world I had counted on. Now, however, I can perceive the harmony which runs through everything throughout universal Nature, and see that spiritual things are connected with the things of earth, only they are of a higher order. In the spirit world we have no such thing as a dying plant. They rise up in beauty and throw out an exquisite perfume, far superior to that of the flowers with you, although your flowers and their perfumes are likewise beautiful. Our grass sends up a most delightful odour, of which you have little conception. Our water is sparkling, beautiful, crystallised, and our mountains are decked in a manner inexpressibly superior to those of earth.

Before closing this lecture I may state: I promised myself that upon that pyramid or pinnacle of the mountain from

Digitized by Google

which I could see another world or sphere I would take my stand, and there look upon Nature in her unsullied array. There, then, is where I tarried, and in my next lecture I shall address you upon what I saw from that pyramid.

The following Invocation was then given through the medium :—"Spirit of Life—of Love—of Truth! It is needless to ask Thee to send forth Thy beams of Light and Mercy upon us and upon this world, for I have already experienced Thy Kindness and Thy Love; and those that are upon earth as well as those that are here have also felt them. Cheer, Oh Father! through Thy laws, cheer those who are weak and oppressed in heart. Strengthen their faltering footsteps. Teach them to cleanse themselves of that which is not fit either for their spirits or for their bodies, and with honesty of purpose as their guide, let them study Truth, and cherish it as their motto. Decked with these two priceless jewels, nought on earth—nought in the spiritual world— can rob them of the satisfaction of knowing Thee, for Thou art Truth and perfect Love.

"Oh, Deity! whose reality and whose true visage are not to be found within walls, but whose living, truthful hand marks the stern rock, the bubbling brook, the rippling sea, the rushing wind, and all Nature in its sublime grandeur, feed Thy vast creation with Thy living, loving Truth.

"Then, Oh Father! may we not only hope for Thy blessings, but also that we may be drawn nearer to Thee in goodness by Thy Divine Love, which Thou impartially extendeth to all Thy children. Then shall be wiped away with one thought the misrepresentations that have been given and accepted of Thee; and then, having learnt and felt Thy loving mercy, shall all know and feel Thy loving justice. Good night."

Digitized by Google

LECTURE II.

DELIVERED 8TH DECEMBER, 1874.

GOOD EVENING. I shall now open to you the scene I beheld from the cliff or pinnacle of the mountain that I stood upon.

As far as my spiritual vision could perceive I observed landscapes of the most beautifully arrayed order that I ever could possibly have imagined. I also saw vast cities which glistened in the distance with their spiry tops. The hills, the mountains, the vales, all seemed to correspond in beauty; and as I thus beheld what was around and about me, I felt, indeed, how far short of the true conception was the dwarfed idea I had entertained when upon earth, of the Infinite Being termed "God." My spiritual clairvoyant sight—for such I will term it—seemed to penetrate further than my most sanguine hopes could have taken me. I beheld in the distance rivers, lakes, and seas, all sparkling as if they were formed of precious stones. The waters of these rivers seemed to chase down the mountain heights in perfect harmony, emitting in their rapid course, delightful vibrations of music. This, with the waving of the trees which were around me and growing upon the hill on whose summit I stood, seemed to respond in time and music, not one note of discord being apparent. The birds that hopped gently from limb to limb imparted a prettiness and beautifulness which I could not have thought to have ever beheld. As I was thus standing looking down upon these enchanting scenes I saw what appeared to be a lady spirit—a spirit of beauty—ascending the hill on which I then stood, and which she mounted slowly and with apparent difficulty. I felt an impulse to go down to meet her; and I

Digitized by Google

was drawn towards her by some power then unknown to me, but which I have since learned; a power I will explain in some future lecture. Gently I moved along the path, which I trod with the greatest of ease. I saw her gathering flowers, which she formed into beautiful bouquets and wreaths, and although engaged in such a pleasant occupation, yet a cloud seemed to hang around her face, and there was a something lacking, notwithstanding the joyful scenes around her. Gradually approaching I felt that I had been in her company before. When close to her I stopped and scanned her countenance. I then beheld one who, when upon earth, wore a crown. I was, as it were, rivetted to the spot, continuing to gaze upon her, scarcely realising the fact that it was the spirit of one before whom I had stooped while upon earth. I said to her —"Friend, are you the one I knew upon earth?" "Yes," was the answer. "Do you not perceive the spell that exists between us,—that of the two powers being joined together? We have met before. You were drawn to me, and until I saw you I could not tell why I was attracted to the side of the hill" "But have you not had disappointments since you have been here?" I enquired. "Yes, many," was the answer. "I find that instead of being waited upon I have to do everything here for myself, and learn how to do it. Knowledge can, I perceive, only be gained by searching for it, and deeply enquiring into and learning how to do things." "How is it," I said, "that a cloud still hangs over your face and around your spirit-form in the manner that it does?" "Would," she said, "I could recall the life I spent upon earth! Even amid these lovely scenes, wrought as they are in glory,—uplifting one great and mighty song to the higher spheres,—I am not happy. Would that I could undo the greater part of the actions of my earth-life! Would that I could return and live that life over again! I should then attempt to make it return me a thousandfold more the happiness than my past life has

Digitized by Google

done! a life that I trifled away and did not utilise as I should have done." "But will not your many acquaintances help or assist you?" I asked. "They will merely point me out the road to anything I wish to know or do; they tell me that I must learn and seek for myself," was the reply. Here she dropped a flower, and I felt an inclination to stoop and pick it up, but I was restrained by a power and drawn back, and she, upon whom thousands had waited in the earth-life, had to stoop and pick up the blossom herself. She bade me adieu, saying we should meet again, and passed on.

Now, considering the vast and beautiful scenes I had beheld, I was determined to start at the trunks or roots of them all, and trace them up. I stooped and took the bud of a flower I saw. After taking it it seemed to expand with a rapidity of growth marvellous to behold; it sprang forth from a bud into a noble flower. On an examination of this flower I perceived that it was arranged in double sets of four large blossoms amalgamated in one, the petals forming a sort of shelter to them. From this flower there emanated a bright light, which I ascertained to be a fine magnetic current passing from the stem of the flower, tracing itself in the leaves and then emerging from the centre, whence it sent out a glow much the same as phosphorus does with you, and eventuating in glassy, twinkling brightness, like that which the diamond emits.

After passing through these woods and vales I felt a desire for more company. I wished to return to the city I had visited previously, and see if I could not ascertain whether the structures comprising it were as firm and solid as those of earth. I found that—although I knew not the direction—by concentrating my mind upon the locality, and exerting my will-power, I was lifted and launched forth, and once more I arrived at the gates, where I saw thousands of spirits coming from different directions, bringing bouquets of flowers of

Digitized by Google

every description. The leaves of the flowers were pendant, and I was told that while being gathered many of them emitted strains of music. I was then wafted inside the vast and noble city. Here seeing many of my acquaintances, I determined to find out whether the different religious sects which exist upon earth are combined in these spheres. Meeting a sage, whose hair hung down below his shoulders, his eyes glistening with brightness, tranquillity reigning in his features, and with the softness of dew in the expression of his countenance, I thus addressed him: "Most reverend sir, can you give me any enlightenment upon what I have seen? I wish to be taken through this great city, and have it explained to me how it was built, and I also wish to know, sage, as to many questions which have arisen in my mind concerning the sects and religions of Earth, whether they are all combined, or are they scattered through this vast sphere." "Come forward," he said, "I will be your guide for the present. I will, in the first place, take you to a community of those who are generally called 'of advanced minds' in these spheres. This city is inhabited by men—spiritual men—we will call them such—who, when upon earth, were of a liberal turn of mind, who had the happiness to benefit the human family, and sought to do good in various ways; and when they passed on they formed into what you may term a band, or a strong company. I do not belong to this sphere, but I often visit it with pleasure, just as a man visits with delight the scenes of his childhood. It is to this city that my sympathies are attracted; it was I who laid the foundation stone of that vast and mighty pile which you see before you." "How strange, friend; indeed, 'tis strange. You speak to me of things I desire to understand. It is only little that I have as yet formed of a conception of these things, and it seems even now that I am looking through the wrong end of the spy-glass," was my remark. "Ah, friend," he returned,

Digitized by Google

"you need not to look through either end of the glass. The more you dive into what you see, the greater and more expanded will become your power—your spiritual power. This way."

He took me then through various houses, and introduced me to many of the company there present, speaking all the while in such soft and delightful language that it was enchanting to my spiritual sense to listen to him. Here I met one who had passed away from earth when young. I found that he had to tarry and learn that which would have been taught him in the terrestrial sphere. I ascertained that the passing on of little children was attended with disadvantage —that it was preferable to live a healthful and good-aged life on earth; and then, when the form could no longer sustain the spirit, to enter upon its new scene of life. I then asked: "Where are all those, friend, that have passed away from earth in youth?" "I will take you to the locality where many of them sojourn," he replied, "and will explain to you the mode for finding it."

We passed down the streets of the city, from one to another, until we came to a large square, where there was a great combining of spirits, whose demeanour one to another impressed me with the conviction that they were bound together by so strong a tie that nought could sever them.

We passed on farther, until we came to a group of a different sort: that is to say, they were young—all young, and residing in one part of the city. I perceived that they were blended together by a power which drew them sympathetically one to another; and here I found that if you were in perfect harmony with one you were drawn to, you had no need to use vocal speech to communicate; for, by the blending of thoughts, you could read each other just as you can writing through a glass "Wondrous," I exclaimed, as I looked upon what I there beheld; "it is truly wonderful." After

Digitized by Google

we had visited other parts of this great city, turning to my guide I asked. "Is this really firm? Are its foundations built of the same material as those of the cities of earth?" "No, friend," was the response, "certainly not; yet to your eye it appears so." "How is that?" I asked. "Your spiritual eye," he replied, "has not yet become *en rapport* with spiritual things. You yet have about you an earthly taint which you have to rid yourself of. You measure what you now see by the same conception that clung to you in the rudimentary sphere. These old thoughts—these old clingings—must pass away before you can compute things by the true spiritual measure." "How long will that be?" I sighed. "Sometime," was the response.

He then drew me away to a high or lofty mountain. I seemed to have been borne on a cloud, and I could not see as I passed on. "Here," he said, pointing to a valley, "is the place where many thousands of spirits have joined together. They are of, what you term, the Protestant denomination. Here they commemorate all their anniversaries. They have piles of buildings, as you can see. You can stray over them if you wish. These spirits still believe that they have yet to pass into the existence which, when upon earth, they contemplated attaining when they passed from thence, for they still hold to the old idea of 'heaven.' If you like, we will step down and there behold the signs." I was curious—my curiosity being raised, and spiritual curiosity is far more intense than the earthly, because there is something so grand, so awful, so mystic—there is investing everything something so mysterious to a new born spirit that he is anxious not to tarry, but to grasp at once the whole of the universe. We seemed to fly down, and there I saw many whom I had known upon earth, all thinking that the "Resurrection Day,"—"the Judgment Day," was yet to come, and that they were still to pace the paths they did while on

Digitized by Google

the mundane sphere. Addressing the sage, I said: "Spirit! canst thou tell me how it is that these spirits here still cling to that which they were taught when upon earth—when they see the vast and wondrous things before them?" "Yes. Do you not see, friend," said he, "that those who are of that prejudiced and fixed opinion cannot penetrate further than what they have seen upon earth? They have brought their old ideas with them—all their old thoughts, and they cannot change them until their spiritual vision is opened; until the faculties of the spiritual life are further developed they cannot break away from the path they have marked out for themselves. You can hear them harping on the same old tunes—uttering the same shouts of glory and cries for mercy as when upon earth. But we cannot linger."

We departed, and a cloud seemed to pass over my vision. We travelled with rapidity, for I could feel we did so from our passage through the air—the traversing of which I cannot describe—so peculiar is it. We came to vast and mighty plains. They extended farther than my spiritual sight could penetrate, and I could see cities in every direction. I turned to my companion and said: "Friend! shall I ever reach the termination of those plains? for they seem to extend to such an incomprehensible distance that my thoughts seem to sink within me, and my heart to tremble whilst I journey on." "Fear not, brother," he rejoined; "you are under my guidance. I will take you and deliver you right through these plains before I leave you."

Presently we came upon a vast Roman Catholic body who had banded together. They appeared to cherish a feeling of too great resentment to allow us admission within their city. I heard convent bells chime and chime and chime, and I exclaimed—"Canst thou here chime with music and melody? Canst thou here ring out the notes of old superstition? Hath thine owners become milder in this sphere? Have not the

Digitized by Google

foundations of their priestly system been shaken? It seems not, for even here they still have huge buildings with lofty domes towering to the skies of the spiritual universe!" Thought I: Have they not yet received the light which I so craved after in earth-life, and which I did not receive until I entered spirit-life. Is that which I now behold really true; or am I yet sojourning upon the earth? Higher I must have risen,—aye, higher,—for such scenes as I now witness I could not have seen upon the terrestial sphere. Turning to the sage I gave expression to my thoughts, thus: "Friend, indeed, I feel yet half a doubt whether I have passed through that change termed 'death.'" He made no response, but pressed with his hands my spiritual brow, and I awoke to a vision; after the passing of which, as permission was not granted us to enter the city, we hovered over it, as stars seem to hover over your world. "Wait," said my guide, "and I will open your visional powers, so that your perception will expand and you will then be enabled to perceive the amount of bigotry and prejudice that are rampant in this body, qualities that are as rife with them still as when they trod the earth." Here, by coming in contact with a spirit, one becomes endowed with the faculty of reading the feelings that are within that spirit. "But, friend," continued my guide, "I am proud to say that the days are fast coming when such parties as these you now behold will not be banded together to perpetuate superstition; then man shall tread the silvery shore with his conscience free, and will not have his reason led captive, as has been too long the case, but he will come forth in his new birth as the child of innocence, waiting to receive readily the grand truths of spiritual life." Taking a parting glance at the community below us, I could not but reciprocate the repugnance which they apparently entertained towards us.

Again we swept on over hill and dale, and as we paused we saw many towns or villages, the inhabitants of which were

Digitized by Google

far more in harmony than the great body we had recently left behind. Near one of these villages we tarried at the residence of a spirit who seemed to be a friend of the old sage. He took us by the hand, and led us up a pathway to his beautiful house or mansion, but not a mansion of the description pertaining to any of earth. The framework was light, elegant, and yet simple; nothing discordant about it. It seemed to be supported in a manner of law, beauty, and harmony. Being weak with my travels, I was led gently by the hand into a room, which opened out upon a lawn, from whence proceeded the most delightful fragrance of flowers. The beautiful scene around was enhanced by the music of a stream which meandered past the house. Friends came around me saying: "Thou art weak from having travelled far; wilt thou take nourishment?" I then thought, how strange! Doth this frame require nourishment? Doth it require rest like that old earth-frame? Then I was just beginning to realise the spiritual existence, and every hour of time, as you would say, seemed to open up to me a new light. They brought me some liquid, the tasting of which, even in the smallest quantity, imparted wondrous strength to me. I now extended myself for repose, and slept, not as when in the physical body, but its equivalent in spiritual life, and during the slumber my visional powers were expanded. In my vision I swept over the space that I was destined to traverse. I travelled over spheres and grades that I was subsequently to visit. I saw the countenances of many who had departed from earth long before me, who, I thought, if the religion I had been taught were true, would be writhing in the torments of a fiery furnace. After awakening—being much refreshed by my sleep—I got into conversation with four marked spirits, who appeared to be the rulers of this plane or sphere. I asked them: "Is there, or is there not, friends, a hell in this universe? for it appears to me that I have seen nothing as yet to bring to my mind

Digitized by Google

the teachings I received when young as being true. Is there really a place where they torment in a diabolical manner—in the way I was taught when on earth?" "No, friend," was their answer; "but it will be your duty to pass through these grades, and find, if you can, such a place, now that you have visited some of the brighter parts of the second sphere. There are other planes, but you must be taken back again to the first. We shall lead you forth in the evening, when you will see many of your old companions who have led a restless, useless spirit-life—each taking the path that he was most fond of when upon earth." I said, "Friends, I want not to learn or know these things that are distressing. I wish to be introduced to the most pleasant scenes." "Ah! tarry," they said, "you must pass through the lower as well as the higher." "Well, I am agreeable," was my reply; "but come, I feel in a hurry. I feel as if the time were short. I am impatient to proceed and penetrate the mysteries surrounding all I have to see."

Onward we started, and we took a path. There are paths, as they explained to me, running towards every point of your compass, varying in breadth,—some three feet, some ten feet, some twenty, and others forty feet of your earthly measurement; there are none broader than those of the last-named dimensions. These paths run North, South, East and West. They are intersected by paths of more contracted breadths leading to a centre. You would find it a very difficult thing if you were placed on one of these roads; you would, when traversing these paths for the first time, without any aid, be in a dilemma as to the direction for proceeding. It was so with me. I was frightened to start on any of these multitudinous tracks, for I had heard that spirits who did not know them, were usually brought to the centre, and there remained until some kind and helpful spirit came to hand to release them.

The direction of these paths was then explained to me, and I was informed that by facing the north I would receive a

Digitized by Google

peculiar sensation. I did as directed, when I felt a strong magnetic current striking on the base of my head. I was then told to turn my back to the north, and in doing so a strong current met me on the chest, thus indicating, most markedly, two of the so-called cardinal points by which to travel. I was counselled and directed to travel wholly and solely for the present by those paths or main roads, and not diverge away into the smaller tracks.

(A lengthened pause here occurred, owing to a loud peal of thunder.)

The electricity which is flying about is too much for me. I will try and impart to you an understanding of those paths which, I stated, varied in width, and which, I was about to observe, are separated by distances approximating to ten of your miles. In those spaces are rendezvous, where spirits who are baffled or misled find a centre to which they are drawn, and then placing the spiritual pulse of their spiritual bodies to the north or south, they can judge of the distance yet to traverse ere they arrive at their destination. The smaller paths generally lead into different planes of the sphere; for, let me tell you, each country of earth,—Hindoos, Turks, and all other nations, too numerous to mention,—have planes of their own.

I am tracing back———————————————

(The Medium was here relieved from the trance, the atmosphere, apparently, being too densely surcharged with the electric fluid to permit of further control.)

Digitized by Google

LECTURE III.

DELIVERED 11TH DECEMBER, 1884.

GOOD EVENING. You may have been surprised at the abrupt termination of my utterances on the last evening of our meeting, when I was compelled to resign control of the Medium without being enabled to afford you an explanation. But, friends, it would be difficult for any of you to speak intelligibly to others in the face of a gale of wind. 'Twas the same with myself on the evening referred to; for the lightning or the electricity around us took, or scattered away, the power as quickly as we gathered it, and hence the unfinished lecture at our session when last we met.

I believe I left off at what I designated as electrical paths or roads. In measurement of distance spirits cannot, perhaps, compete with yourselves, for the ease with which they travel the greatest distances naturally causes them to become indifferent to any such computation. If you have to walk a mile on foot exertion of every muscle in your body is called into requisition, and the pace is necessarily so slow that you note every yard that you pass over. Whereas with us to accomplish a distance even exceeding all with which you are familiar requires little or no exertion, and is almost synonymous with a thought!

Those magnetic or electric paths of different widths, running from north to south, and intersected by others trending east and west, are separated by distances approximating, as I observed, to ten of your miles. Those paths intersecting each other at right angles may be termed the main roads; for there are others of less width leading in various directions.

Digitized by Google

An explanation was given me as to the direction to which those paths led, and I then had a good conception of the manner in which I could accomplish any journey I wished to undertake. These things we have to learn as the infant to walk and the child to speak. You cannot take an infant of a few hours old and place it upon its feet and see it walk across the room. No; it requires the tender care and guidance of a nurse for many months before it can walk by itself. 'Tis the same with spirits on their advent to the new existence. They require the guidance and the knowledge of those who have been there before them to show and explain to them the mysteries which surround them. After having travelled some distance along one of those paths my companion said that we should soon reach a city. Drawing near to this city I felt a peculiar sensation coming o'er my spiritual being. I felt that I was being gradually drawn to a place where I would really feel more comfortable than I had yet done, for I had hitherto been ill at ease in the society of those with whom I had associated. If you take a person with no eye for the beautiful and place him in the company of those who delight in the æsthetical, how very little would he enjoy their society? It was the same with myself. I felt that I was so far under the knowledge of these, excepting the lowest I have mentioned, that I really looked up to them with what I might call a painfulness of friendship—not being level with them in feeling, mind, or knowledge. As we drew near to the city my guide told me that in it I should find my home, that there I should meet associates who would mix with my thoughts—with my aspirations—with my actions; and that there I should be more content.

Arrived within view, there appeared to be a cloudiness over the city, in which there were lights shining; and around which was what I may (for want of a better term) call a wall, piercing which at regular distances were entrances decorated

Digitized by Google

by arches of elaborate design. Lamps of brilliancy, illuminated by lights of all the colours of the rainbow, were suspended from these arches; and the whole formed a circle of majestic appearance, excelling anything of the kind I had yet witnessed.

Upon each arch was inscribed a spiritual motto; and upon the main one, under which we stepped, there was written in letters of silver: "See to thyself, that in thy spiritual form there is no inharmony: wear the grace and the inward feelings of truth through all your spirit-efforts."

There were no sentinels or watchers at those entrances, and we passed inside the arched wall without let or hindrance. Directly I had passed the threshold of that arch, I experienced a feeling that assured me I had really found my home—a home for a time at least—in which I could remain quiescent and content. The various spirits who had acted as my guides, and those with whom I had been associated, were above me. Their knowledge was greater than mine; their intellectual capacities were so far beyond my own that I could not enjoy their company or society, as I have already observed.

I was led forward by my spirit guide, and introduced to several members, whose names it would be useless for me to mention, as they are not written upon "the scroll of fame." I was taken in hand; and I soon found that those who were there enjoyed everything which could cultivate the highest portions of their spiritual intellect. Spirits of higher grades, I ascertained, occasionally visited (but not for any length of time), for the purpose of seeing and encouraging the progress of the inhabitants.

After having passed into a pavilion, and from thence into a large mansion, I was told that the latter would be my home for the present. There, to my joy, my children, whom I had not seen since my advent to the spirit-land, came to me. They had grown both in stature and in loveliness, and now

Digitized by Google

beamed with light and love. They far outstripped me in spiritual matters. I took one by the hand, and asked her name. "Well," she said, "I bear not my earth-name, which has given place to that of Violetta." "Thou art a pretty flower," I returned; "thou couldst never have grown so lovely decked in that form called the 'body;' in it thou couldst never have been developed or brought to such a state of purity; why, child, I look through thee—to thine inward thoughts and actions! I can read thee, and I fail to see a single tinge of darkness about thee! Go, child; thou art too bright a star for me to gaze upon; thy beaming love seems to strike through my heart. Go, child; thy very society—the influences which thou throwest off doth affect me so that I see mine own impurities made more manifest. Go, child, for the present, and when thy father hath cleansed himself of his earthly stains thou canst come and see him." The child moved not, but seemed to appeal with the most tender looks of love to me, and to deprecate my decision. But could I—aye, could I and she, such a jewel of goodness, purity and loveliness, keep company?—for the radiance of her countenance, the action of her spiritual form, the colour and texture of her raiment, were far above my highest attainments, and excelled all I had ever hoped for. Imagine a parent having to send his child away from him because he knew that he was unfit to remain in her presence. The child soon afterwards disappeared, but ere doing so promised me most faithfully to return at some other time.

My guide again came forward, and he said: "Here thou wilt tarry; I will frequently come to see thy progress in the ways of knowledge and goodness, and with due effort thou wilt soon be lifted up." "Friend, I do attend to thy words," I remarked. He continued, "I was drawn to you that I might help you forward, for, friend and brother, I wish to see you advance higher and to a more glorious existence than any you

Digitized by Google

have even dreamed of. There are many spheres besides this you are in; there are many planes appertaining to this sphere of which you are an inhabitant; you have seen but two as yet, so that you have several more to pass through. Now try and trip the way, and step out in the path of truth, and rich will be your reward."

After he had gone friends came forward and greeted me; friends, the sight of whose old, familiar faces, seemed to lift the blood in my spiritual veins!* Many there I met whose friendship in boyhood I had cherished; those who had passed away at schoolboy ages, and with whom I had joined in merry, reckless sports, I again, in that spirit sphere, did meet. After the usual friendly greeting had subsided one of them thus addressed me: "Surely it is time for you to wake up." Why such an address should have been elicited I know not. It may be that my eyes manifested a dull, dreamy state. There were some there whose friendship I had, while upon earth, courted too much, and who were too prone to lead me on to that which would not benefit me; and how easily I yielded to their leading may be learned from the record of my spiritual advent—when my soul floated to no more elevated plane than the low one to which I have alluded!

The highest and noblest use of friendship I scarcely realised while confined to the earth-sphere; where, alas! convivial and festive friendship secured my strongest attachment. Educated as I had been in a stereotyped and conservative groove, the true offices and uses of friendship were not pointed out to me, viz., that friendship which should aid the moral culture, and cause selfishness to flee away.

My spiritual teachings so far were scarce proof against the attractions of these, my earth companions, for I felt strongly

* The spiritual body is almost the counterpart of the physical, the latter being merely the temporary manifestation of the unseen reality within.

Digitized by Google

drawn by their power. Yes, verily, too strong were the earthly feelings that yet clung to me. My form might be clearer, but too much of the turbid nature yet adhered to me; for there was the attraction (and it was fascinating to me) of finding that those were around me whose feelings were somewhat akin to mine own; and all the spiritual teachings I had received barely sufficed to cast out that attraction which Nature had made so fascinating to me, and which I had cultivated.

Some of my old friends led me forth into what seemed a street, whose brilliancy of lights flashed with meteor-like beauty. From thence they conducted me to what, judging by the exterior, appeared like a temple, or place devoted to acts of worship; but which was in reality a theatre! Lo! here was I placed upon old, familiar ground—that ground upon which I had in the earth-life delighted to tread. I was in ecstacies to find that my elysian avocation of earth was represented in spirit-life—that I could participate, as of yore, in those enjoyments which were the height of my ambition! I entered that building, and there I found an immense concourse of spirits assembled to witness the efforts of some of the greatest poets and philosophers towards bringing into a state of greater perfection the best of the old dramas or plays which are enacted upon earth. I looked on with wonder and amazement. How could I avoid such feelings? for I had fancied that I should reach "heaven;" but there, in that city, I beheld a scene, the counterpart, almost, of some towards whose effectiveness in the physical sphere I had devoted my best energies. No wonder that feelings of surprise came o'er me as I looked upon that scene—a scene I had little thought of witnessing in the Spirit-World! No wonder that the scenes I had beheld ere my advent to that city should have but a passing charm for me after witnessing the grand, histrionic manifestations within that building which, in my simplicity, I had mistaken for a temple! There I felt at

Digitized by Google

home—all my nature worked within me, and vibrated to such an extent as to cause what I had seen to drift past my vision like the wind across the sky on a summer's day.

From the theatre I was conducted to a large garden, where I met many of those whose names, here on earth, are associated with astronomical science. In that garden they were continuing those studies to which they had devoted themselves when upon the earth-sphere. I then had my spiritual vision directed to a galaxy of vast orbs incessantly revolving around, paying obeisance to the central luminary to whose system they belonged. To those great astral * globes—to their period, order and motions—were those astronomical students devoting their attention. In lieu of twinkling little stars those worlds appeared, from my point of observation, as mighty globes; for in such near proximity was the locale of my standpoint that I distinctly viewed them performing their rapid evolutions in their unimaginable orbits! But beyond those great rolling globes, in the incalculable distance—distance far transcending all conception of the human mind—for no combination of numbers is adequate to express such distance—I beheld an infinity of worlds traversing the boundless regions of immensity—systems upon systems of vast assemblages of worlds each revolving around its sun; while all were silently, and with the most perfect order and arrangement, performing their obediential movements in accord with the unerring laws of Nature, which are the laws of the infinite Source of all things, both material and spiritual. Having gazed long and reverently upon that most marvellous scene—where innumerable worlds could be viewed in ceaseless motion and activity—I turned away and sought my home.

My home! But still there appeared to me to be something deficient in the community by which it was surrounded.

* Astral to the eye of man.

Digitized by Google

When you have once passed through rich gardens, whose flowers are beautiful and fragrant, you long to return and enjoy that which has so pleased and gratified you. So with myself, for in that garden where I had beheld scenes surpassing all powers of description—scenes of worlds, mighty worlds, and systems of worlds—inconceivably extended systems, with all their accompanying excellencies and grandeur—my soul began to realise the truth of there being more ennobling spheres of existence than any yet I had sojourned in; and to attain to those exalted spheres, intuition informed me that all my best endeavours must be exercised—that I must exert them towards the suppression and eradication of all lowering tendencies, and to the due cultivation of those destined to adorn my soul. Everyone in that grade to which I belonged appeared to be in a happy frame of mind; but there were no manifestations of progress—few, if any, showed symptoms of a desire to strike forward; an apathetic contentment seemed to reign o'er all. I could not avoid observing this non-progressive condition, and, in response to my allusion concerning it, some of those who had sojourned there during a prolonged period, said: "What do we wish to progress for? Behold our houses —our gardens—our walks! Why should we trouble ourselves about that of which we can know, but which requires so much labour to attain? Many, when upon earth, have sighed that they might gather together the riches thereof, so that they could rest and enjoy themselves. Here we have all the riches, all the enjoyments and social culture—everything we wish for. Why, then, should we try to progress, and depart from such a beautiful world as this?"

Naturally enough I drifted into the same channel of feeling, and so passed, during many years, a state of happiness and joy, yet withal a feeling that I was scarcely acting aright.

(By request of the speaker the circle was now broken up, and an intermission of a quarter of an hour took place.)

Digitized by Google

"Wherefore," said my associates on the same plane of existence, "should we try to progress, as it is termed, when everything here is replete with such richness and beauty? Stay on among us; enjoy the gifts that Nature has given you; admire the scenes by which you are surrounded. We can take you, aye, where you little dream of; we can take you through nations and tribes; even the scenes you have so long coveted we can show you. Then why should we trouble ourselves in endeavours to gain a higher path than the one we are on?" Ah! here was my feeling exactly when upon earth, where, as long as I had plenty of nourishment and enjoyment, I was satisfied. Life to me with such enjoyments was of more importance than the future, though when I looked into and made the acquaintance of Nature, I admired and loved her; but still there was that power about me which bound me more to the present than was compatible with one who had an eternal future before him.

I fully fell into their mode of thinking, and so thoroughly was I captivated by their animated conversations upon the topic of pleasure, that I resigned myself for a time to the life of stationary quiescence, which had such fascinating charms as to retain in bondage so many sentient souls. Yes, I was determined to become a probationer in that non-progressive yet happy grade—non-progressive for a time only, a time that, in the estimate of mankind, may appear prolonged; but the mandates of Progress must eventually be complied with. There is no alternative, Progress is as inevitable as the laws of our being. As most of you, to whom I address myself, are aware, if you give way to a certain habit, and fall deeper and deeper into it, the more difficult becomes the task of breaking the connection which binds you to it. It seems to hold you as a slave—so powerful is it that no slight effort will suffice to shake it off; but all the energy and determination of which you are possessed have to be exerted to rid yourself of it. It

Digitized by Google

was so with myself, for I realised to the full, after a rather prolonged sojourn in that sphere of unaspiring thought, the arduous task I had of combating successfully with the luke-warmness or want of aspiration which had taken me captive.

It was in that sphere where I became aware of what should have thoroughly subjugated the self-esteem with which I had been inflated. Alas! I learned that not to myself alone was the credit due of having traced with my pen those effusions which have imparted such rapturous feelings to succeeding generations; but to others, unseen, unknown, though felt by myself, were to be ascribed those things for which I alone have been applauded by earth's people. In that sphere it was that the veil fell completely from my eyes; and, in one brief sentence, I found what an insignificant being, as a man, I was when upon earth Had those agencies been relaxed or taken away, my tongue must have cloven to my mouth, my pen must have been unable to write those sentiments which have been handed down to you, for the power was not in me to express them. Yes, yes, there are more things in heaven and earth than are thought of in the philosophy of mankind, words akin to which I was impressed to write while yet I was confined by the mortal tenement.

A yearning for travel is one of the leading characteristics of the denizens of the sphere of which I am now speaking. In this regard I was certainly in affinity with them, and it was my ambition to travel through the spheres; but I ascertained that I could not travel above the grade to which I was then subject.

The amenities appertaining to spiritual society are in no sense analogous to those which obtain on the face of this globe of earth. No, Oh, no! Here, on earth, you are amenable, or supposed to be, to the rules of "society." Society binds you. You each form a grade of your own acquaintance. You will not go into the streets or bye-ways, and bring any person

Digitized by Google

into your grade or society, no more than the Queen of your country—no more than the rulers of it seek to do so—to introduce into their spacious and luxurious mansions those who have been reared in poverty. Aye, alas, they neglect that which they should do (not that which I have just mentioned, however), but something of far more importance, namely, the elevation of those minds which are clouded by ignorance. Certainly it is absolutely essential, in the first place, that food for the body should be provided ere pabulum for the mind can be efficacious. That provided, then those whose duty it is should see to it that the mental requirements are not held in abeyance. From this cause—from that neglect of duty—because the higher classes or grades of society will not, or do not step out of their particular circles, and endeavour to bring into a state of action and into a state of purity the minds of those who are beneath them ; from this cause it is that so-called "society" of earth is not as society should be—a thorough, genuine society, whose members are united by one general interest—love for all ! Because of this sad lack, "society" is a misnomer, is spiritless, and a sham !

Behold the difference. In the world unseen by you—that beyond this mundane sphere—each inhabitant finds his own grade by the law of affinity, or by an impetus given him by Nature Nature—immaculate, infallible, and immutable—has the arrangement of society in the Spirit-World, and well she does her work. No hesitation and no partiality are manifested by her in the arrangement, but, on the contrary, unswerving, inexorable determination and impartiality characterise every adjustment. By no capricious or artificial means is a spirit disposed of in the ethereal world, but as water upon the face of this and other physical worlds doth find its level, so does every individual spirit as naturally find his or her level. There is no such thing as a spirit being (to use a phrase in vogue among yourselves) out of his element in the

Digitized by Google

Spirit-world. He may travel among the spirits of other grades beneath his own; but he cannot ('tis impossible!) consociate with them. So that you will perceive from this brief allusion that society in the spheres stands upon an immutable basis—the basis of Nature.

Having expressed a wish to travel, I was informed that any spirit who did so was expected to keep a record of everything worthy of being noted during the period extending over his travels, and as I was perfectly agreeable to keep such a record, so that I might contribute my quota of information to the general community, I intimated my acquiescence to such a reasonable and commendable arrangement.

Anxious to set out on the journey as speedily as possible, I immediately enlisted the sympathies of a company, who entered with alacrity into the design contemplated. There were twenty-four of us in all, and, needing no such preparations as are deemed essential for the comfort of earthly travellers, we set out on our expedition without more ado.

The first grade that we visited was one appertaining to a people known to you as Chinamen. This assemblage we found to possess, prior to the advent of its members to the Inner Sphere of Life, a truer conception of that life than do even the most advanced sects of that body styled "Christians"—a body which, as a rule, is so supercilious, so arrogant, so presumptuous, as to hurl the epithet "infidel" at all outside its bigoted pale! The rites performed at the sepulture of the mortal remains of Chinese (it was pointed out to us), though of a ludicrous character, indicated a firm belief in the continuance of a natural life. But, like other people of earth who are in the vanguard of civilisation, they are reluctant to embrace any innovation upon customs which have been transmitted to them by their forefathers; and though the more intelligent of the nation do not give credence to that which the less educated implicitly believe, yet the

Digitized by Google

same superstitious obsequies are still performed as in ancient times, so reverential is their estimate of the practices of antiquity. But, notwithstanding this veneration for the customs of their forefathers by the Chinese, we were informed, by those with whom we held converse in that grade, that the then generation of their countrymen and those immediately preceding it cherished conceptions of the future and eternal existence closely approximating to the truth.

We were also told that their nation possessed records of what no other nation did, or possibly could, possess; for, although the portion of the earth now known as China was not the first part that was inhabited by mankind in their incipient condition, yet circumstances so favoured the people who migrated thither that they were the first to utilise the powers of language, and, as a sequence, their transactions were early recorded in the form of hieroglyphics, and hence they can refer back to events that have occurred in connection with their history many thousands of years prior to the written records of those nations which are prone to boast of their antiquity. The number of that nation, known to you as Chinese, which are living in this present generation, exceeds by far that of any other nation, and this in itself is somewhat significant of its antiquity. Being such a very ancient people it is impossible to imagine the numbers who have passed to the spirit-world from that particular locality of earth!—the numbers are now incomprehensible—inconceivable!—infinitely in excess of the united population of your globe in the present day!

We next entered a grade less exclusive—a grade more heterogeneous, that is, humanly speaking; for, from a spiritual standpoint, the whole race of mankind is considered in the light of homogeneity, as one, evolved by the same mighty Evolver of all worlds and peoples. That grade comprised spirits of men and women from various parts of the earth;

Digitized by Google

and those spirits were animated by a desire to cultivate these sublime and exalted faculties which give birth to sentiments and thoughts of truth and love. They were in possession of no little knowledge and intellectual resources, which, if brought to light upon this globe, and transfused into the minds of its inhabitants, would prove of immense value, especially in a religious aspect, for such knowledge would germinate into blossoms of righteousness, which is the essence of true religion, and impart a perfume of deathless fragrance. But, alas! the ocean of prejudice, ignorance, and bigotry is as yet at too great flood to admit of any but the most limited streams of knowledge, which, however, thanks to ceaseless energetic Progress, are ever extending, ever enlarging, slow and gradual, it may be, but sure and certain.

We passed on and came to a third plane or grade, occupied by the spirits of people known to you as Hindoos, all drawn together, and united as one great family, in all of whose members were displayed harmony, love, sympathy and peace.

And so we travelled, visiting, during a space of time equivalent to a period approximating to ten of earth's years, many grades of spirits, too numerous to mention and particularise in this lecture; but I cannot resist dwelling for a moment upon the grade of "savages" which we visited—the spirits of those who, in the first sphere of existence, were unfettered by anything appertaining to "religion," that is, religion in the popular, limited, and degrading acceptation of the term. Religion, of course, of some kind animated their souls, but it was a religion devoid of theological teachings, or teachings known as such. Unvarnished by civilisation, uncontaminated by any churchly teachings, those children of Nature believed when they passed away that there was something beyond, many of them anticipating a "Happy Hunting Ground" of some description for their benefit. These ignorant, untutored savages had no bible, save the Bible of Nature—that Volume

Digitized by Google

which is ever open for perusal, and from which they could derive conceptions of a more correct theology than could those who have limited their researches to bibles made by the hands of designing men. Yes, with minds unbiassed they could derive a higher theology, one approximating to truth, by beholding and contemplating the imposing majesty, beauty, and grandeur of all things in Nature—the magnificent stellar systems above and beyond them, the wonderful earth and its appurtenances beneath and about them; and, viewing the future world by the light of analogy, it was possible for them to attain a better idea of the spiritual spheres than have those whose minds have been trammelled by book-learning and the superstitious traditions of antiquity.

Now, if the Divine Spark can abide and kindle in the breast of a savage, and engender within it the hope of a "Happy Hunting Ground" in the future, why should presumptuous arrogance, by its puny fiat, dare to consign to oblivion (or, what is worse, to eternal torment) that which the Great Positive Mind has destined to progress to the highest state of perfection Oh! "Christians," 'tis time—'tis time, indeed—that ye abjured such a degrading superstition—such horrid blasphemy. Awake! arise! and divest yourselves of the opinions hereditarily imbibed from your ignorant and priest-ridden forefathers. Seek ye, look up to, and venerate the truth, not as it is in this or that man's opinion, but as it is in Nature, in, round, and above you. Ah! with all my heart—with all my spiritual soul—I coveted the so-called disadvantages of the child of Nature, disadvantages that, to my mind, presented a favourable contrast to the so-called advantages * pertaining to the religions of civilisation. I coveted the unsophisticated innocence of which the simple

* This word and its antithesis were expressed in a slightly satirica tone.

Digitized by Google

child of Nature is possessed as the strongest birthright of his spiritual existence. No false prejudices bound him; no so-called authoritative teachings acted as cobwebs over his mental vision; and though his faculties were undeveloped on earth, or the first sphere, they were yet free from that alloy which tends to repress their development in the second.

List, Oh! list, my friends. Many of those who, in times long past, were held in contempt and treated as "savages" and "infidels," now stand as the noblest adornments of beauty in those spheres which are embellished by all that is lovely and beautiful.

Ere we retraced our way to the grade to which we were indebted for our home, we passed through a location (on the same plane) corresponding somewhat (as far as regards temperature and atmosphere) to those regions of your earth known as the Arctic and Antarctic, for there the cold, or its spiritual correspondent, appeared to us intense But, behold how beneficent is Nature, which had adapted it for those who were, when on earth, subjected to a clime suitable to their organism, but which others would deem rigorous. Nature, kind and loving, ever exerts herself for the comfort and benefit of all.

I was taken by one of the inhabitants of this location, who said he had been about seventy years in the spheres, to a window of his domicile, from which I viewed a sight hibernal and severe-looking in the extreme. 'Twas a wide and extended valley, bordered by ice-capped mountains stretching to an indefinite distance, each peak in the far distance seeming to rear itself higher and higher, as if in emulation of its fellows. O'er all—o'er valley and o'er mountain—was a dense mantle of snow (not, however, snow like yours of earth, but more resembling silver were it pulverised into the finest imaginable particles), which appeared glistening, shining, sparkling with myriads and myriads of diamonds; and

Digitized by Google

bridges of this silver-snow with diamond appearance connected each mountain peak. The lustrous beams of many suns, reflected from that beautiful mantle, created a light of such refulgence as would be perfectly blinding to the physical sight, but to the spiritual vision the light was one of glory and magnificence.

A clime the very extreme of that I have just briefly alluded to we subsequently traversed, where, neath the luxuriant foliage of its trees, could be seen clustering in joyous groups the swarthy children of the sunny Indies of the West, a clime which you would term "tropical," where the richness of Nature is beyond the power of description, where sentient soul-beings are replete with happiness, thoughts of which cannot otherwise than awake within the soul of the contemplator reflections anent the kind, loving, merciful Father, Who in His infinite beneficence has provided such felicity for His creatures.

Ah! friends, cultivate the acquaintance of Nature. Let Nature be your Bible, for she never lies, never has lied, and never by any possibility can lie. A thorough belief in the *optimity* of Nature must, as a necessary consequence, result from a profound study of her secrets. The more profoundly that study is pursued, the deeper will become the conviction of the immutability and universality of her laws, and of the analogies which are everywhere observable throughout her vast realms.

As a periodical and great meeting of spirits was to take place in the grade to which we were then attached, we returned thereto, that we might not miss the opportunity of attending. Our return home was marked by a feature which, up to that point of my spiritual experience, was peculiar. We arrived at the margin of a vast ocean, where we embarked in a beautiful silvery-like canoe, which was propelled with the greatest of ease, seemingly without labour of any kind! We

Digitized by Google

glided over the gently undulating waves with a velocity unequalled by any method of locomotion with which you are familiar, and we quickly arrived at the city from which we had set out.

Our first duty on arrival was to enter upon tablets the particulars connected with our journey, and any remarks or comments connected therewith; and I thought it would afford me an opportunity of testing the perpetuation of that endowment by which I was characterised while in the earth-life, and for which I have been so eulogised by succeeding generations. But, alas! I soon perceived that I was no longer the vehicle or medium for others' thoughts. With the divesture of the body appertaining to earth, I was no longer the favoured recipient of impressions from beings more exalted than myself. Certainly my mind, freed from the sphere of the rudimentary body, has access to knowledge infinitely beyond that sphere. My perceptions and conceptions are immeasurably enlarged or expanded; but the medial powers (as associated with the transmission of diversified thoughts and sentiments from those beyond my ken) for which I was remarkable, I then perceived that I possessed not. Believe not, however, that the tone of regret as just now expressed pertains to my present existence. Oh, no! for 'tis not by verbal or written niceties that the spirit becomes elevated; but such a consummation is attained alone by the application of his mental or soul force to the elevation of those beneath him.

The tablets were taken by a sage, and deposited in the place assigned them. Three days* subsequently we were summoned to a large hall, where those of the highest repute and greatest "standing" in that sphere compared the records we had made

* By way of note it was here remarked by the lecturer that time in the ethereal world is not measured by days, &c., but, in speaking of such, a space of time equivalent thereto is intended.

Digitized by Google

concerning our visitations with those of others who had immediately preceded us. Each record was compared most particularly, and those assembled were desired to note the comparison, the result of which was that bands of ministering spirits were chosen to assist the exaltation of those in certain grades to whom our records called attention.

Now, although when in the first sphere I had a strong aversion to teaching, and never essayed to be a schoolmaster—my temper lacking that placidity or equanimity so essential in one who ventures upon such a charge—yet here I was ambitious to become one among those bands of missionaries or teachers. My suddenly-aroused desire in this respect caused me to ignore the irritability which was so prominent in my temper, and which was so very much against me in the spiritual existence. But the method adopted by the spirit who had become my guide, for the purpose of checking and suppressing this baneful habit, had already modified it to a considerable extent. When excited or passionate, or when I began to speak with rapid utterance, that spirit immediately raised his hand, when the impatient words appeared to return and undergo a kind of suffocation within me! I soon learned to weigh and measure most carefully what I purposed saying; for the sensation of having to (as it were) eat one's own words was far from agreeable.

I attempted to satisfy my desire of becoming a teacher. But, lo! The first essay—the first step in advance—was quickly succeeded by an involuntary retrograde movement! Back I was drawn by that which is irresistible, inexorable!—for, alas! my propensities were yet too mundane—too earthly; and I had not sufficiently qualified myself to become a teacher of others. I must first teach my own nature to suppress the evil tendencies yet adhering to it Hitherto I had only cultivated those things which led to the satisfying of my spiritual curiosity, and I had yet to learn and cultivate those

Digitized by Google

things which would tend to benefit not only myself but all those with whom I came in contact.

Some of my companions came around and consoled me for the repercussive reproof with which my presumption had been rewarded. Many, with equal presumption, had, in times past (I learned from those companions) met with such silent but stern rebuffs similar to that which had so effectually checked myself.

The New Era * at this time was one of the principal topics of interest and consideration in the spheres; not that it was yet inaugurated, but it was foreseen that the period was near at hand when this auspicious movement would take place. Spirits had ever found their way to earth, and to some few of its inhabitants they had, during the long course of ages, made themselves partially understood; but such communion, owing to the prevailing misconception regarding it, was generally very unsatisfactory, and, moreover, attended with danger to those on the mortal side who were the media for it, the penalty of that physical disunion, known as "death," being enforced upon all who dared to hold converse with those who had passed to the inner sphere of life. And, friends, that penalty has, in the darker ages of the race, been rigorously enforced in a manner the most cruel and torturing; for most of which ecclesiasticism, usurping, as it has done, dominion over the human soul, is responsible.

At the time to which I now allude spirits were taking greater delight in returning to earth in anticipation of the "Era" which prescient intelligences had foretold was approaching—the era of rational spirit intercourse as manifested during the past few years.

From the degrading shackles of superstition and ignorance, which have repressed the highest and most sublime powers of

---

* Spiritual communion with mankind of a rational character as now adopted.

Digitized by Google

mankind, the bright and exalted spirits were anxious to free the race; they were desirous and determined to release the human mind,—to encourage it to aspire to free and unrestricted enquiry. This great and momentous question was frequently discussed in the lower spheres as well as in the higher; for numbers of the denizens of the lower spheres were anxious to communicate with those whom they had left behind; not animated, perhaps, by the exalted motives which stimulated the hopes and desires of their higher or more developed brethren, but animated simply by a desire for ordinary converse.

I, too, was very anxious to return to earth, but the power to do so I had not yet acquired. The old sage, my friend, came to me and said that he had often traversed the mystic path leading to the earth-globe, and, as I was now qualified to return he would accompany me to the planet which had given me birth, and that there I could behold the place which I had used as my home; and that it would be even possible for me to behold my friends who were yet there. My thoughts turned towards the miniature-looking sphere, and my friend, perceiving my agitated frame of mind, took me a little space and said—"Look yonder! Behold yonder little star! That is the planet upon which you once trod." "But how shall we reach it from such a distance?" I somewhat impatiently said. "There are paths leading to it," he returned; "but I do not promise you that you will succeed in making yourself known to your friends, or to anyone in the physical state." "When shall we go?" My old earthly impulsive eagerness was coming o'er me, and my companion, to suppress it, agreed that we should do so without much delay, in some few hours, so that we might visit the globe at an auspicious time—evening.

We started towards the little speck that, with a mutiplicity of others of an apparently similar nature, dotted the regions

Digitized by Google

of boundless infinitude; and in a lapse of time, no greater than that which occupies the relation of this, the little speck appeared as a huge rolling ball or globe.

On entering the atmosphere which envelopes the earth I experienced a choking sensation which caused me to cry out to my guide to tarry until I became relieved. "Hasten," he said, "onward quickly; for the sooner you pass through this the sooner will you be relieved of that choking sensation." It was as he had said; for, that stratum traversed, relief came.

Once again I beheld the houses, churches, spires, woods, vales, and mountains of earth,—that earth o'er a limited portion of which I had roamed, and for a brief space I became bewildered. "Here," said my friend, "come forward, I will show thee what thou hast been desirous of beholding."

Now, here comes a point which, when experienced by the spirit, must deeply grieve him; ah! deeply grieve him, indeed! I ask you to conceive of it, to imagine it, to think of it, if you can.

I was brought into a room of the house which I once inhabited, and there I beheld some of my friends,—my relations. But with all the powers that worked within me, I could not correspond or even make my presence known. I clapped my hands; I beat the air with them; I used my spiritual powers of utterance, but no response came to my calls. I tried to touch each one separately, but the sense of feeling was not reciprocated. I tried to rap on portions of the furniture and thereby cause a sound to arrest the attention of my friends, but my hands passed through the substance. I saw my children; and a father's emotion stirred within me to help them on the path of their earthly life; but they could not feel the part I had to act there. I was within the place which once I lived; but, alas! alas! I could not communicate with those whom still I dearly loved. Ah! the sore anguish

Digitized by Google

I then did feel none can realise but those who have gone through a similar experience, as many many have done who have not had the opportunity of recording it, as I now do.

My commiserating friend and guide then conducted me from that sorrowful scene. "Here, friend, this way," said he, and we entered a church.

Through this same Medium once before I mentioned* what I then did see; but again I revert to it so that they who read can think of it.

I saw a monument bearing the inscription of my age, &c. That monument stood in stately silence, and beneath it a slab —a marble slab; beneath that again what, think ye, did I see? That which on earth I did wear—foul and loathsome now become—placed out of sight—that form, whose possessor was deemed clever and witty by his friends, was now fast mingling with the elements from which it sprang. The tongue, that once did warble forth the wit that was greeted by the acclamations of those who heard it, was now dry or arid. The fingers that once did guide the rapid pen, all withered and decayed—naught left but the bones—a crumbling mass of rubbish; and I, the spirit, who once did animate that mass, standing by and beholding it! Would I, if I could, ere stoop to don again that worn-out clothing e'en though it could be reproduced to the same condition of embellishment that it presented when in the heyday of youth? "Nay, nay, thou ne'er shalt be worn by me again; therefore mingle as thou art doing with the earth whence thou didst issue."

The anguish of feeling experienced by me when in the same apartment with the loved ones—to neither of whom could I

* On a former occasion, through Harris, the lecturer gave an interesting account of the first visit he made to the place where his mortal remains were deposited, but, as no short-hand writer was present, the account was not recorded.

Digitized by Google

succeed in making my presence felt—induced a sensation of sickness; aye, I became sick, sick of earth, and I wished to return to the Spirit-Land, there to remain until a channel was opened, whereby an intelligent system of communication could be made manifest. Until that period arrived—until the "Era" spoken of was ushered in—I ne'er wished to again tread the path to earth, the first return to which had been marked by so much mental suffering to myself.

The Light—the Light to mankind! 'Twas a glorious thought-proleptical, that of the Light soon to dawn upon the earth—a Light which, once expanded, can ne'er contract—ne'er become dimmed! And it was that Light which would give to me a fresh impetus to ascend higher, nearer to the Fountain of Production!

In council assembled, I was made one of the leaders who were to marshal the energies of spirits towards the development of those channels which would be useful for our communications with those upon the earth-sphere. And this was the work from which I anticipated so much good, not alone for myself, but for those whose condition we are ever anxious to ameliorate—the inhabitants of the mundane sphere. I will now repeat an invocation which I heard offered by one who, when upon earth, was classed in the category of "savages:"—

"Oh, God!—Mighty Being—Thou mystery of power and greatness! Around Thee are arranged the Diamonds of Heaven, whose luminous beauty shines forth in glory upon me, an ignorant spirit, awaking within me a fountain of love towards Thee, the Creator of all

"I am a child of Nature, and Thou, Oh, Great Spirit, art my Father—my kind, loving, beneficent Father. Through Nature Thou didst generate the form which clothed this spirit, and for a short time, by Thy gracious love, I did exist upon the birth-sphere; from thence Thou didst transfer me to the beautiful and happy home I now enjoy. For this—for Thy

Digitized by Google

unfailing love towards me and towards all Thy creatures—my soul looks with gratitude and reverence towards Thee. How can I worthily worship Thee? How can I attain to a correct knowledge of Thee? Thy mighty Works revolve around me in such marvellous order and beauty that, gazing upon them, I can but feel the utter unworthiness of myself in comparison to Thee.

"Thou God of the savage! Thou God of the civilised! Thou God of all! How can we trace Thee out but in Thy Laws—Thy Works—which hang around Thee in glory and in mystery! With reverence and with love profound I think of Thee; on Thee, on Thy immutable and all-pervading Laws, I rest. The love that I feel for Thee has proceeded from Thee alone, and I would pour out that love in gratitude to Thee from Whom I received it.

"I pray Thee, Great Spirit, to let the rays of Thy Glory and Love shine upon all Thy children, and may they still continue to shine upon me, whose soul is filled with grateful love towards Thee, the Fountain of All Existence." Good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURES IV. & V.

THESE lectures are unfortunately wanting, through causes which are explained in the introduction. In one of these lectures the control stated that, from his wife having been purer in mind than he was, on her passing to spirit life she had entered a higher sphere than he did, and although her bright spirit was frequently present with him, they could not be re-united until he had progressed sufficiently to enter the fifth sphere. The control spoke of his wife in the most eulogistic terms, stating that she had acted nobly towards their children when on earth; in fact, from his description of her, and the disparaging way in which he spoke of his own earth-life, she was truly entitled to be called *his better half.*

The Editor greatly regrets the loss of these two interesting and instructive lectures, but it is quite beyond his power to replace them.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE VI.

CHRISTMAS EVENING LECTURE.

DELIVERED 24TH DECEMBER, 1874.

GOOD EVENING. Returning as I do from other worlds—returning to the earth from whence I came—it would only be natural, and also friendly, that I should make some observations on the holiday which you are now celebrating.

I cannot say to you as I would to those who are in England, who observe Christmas with all its religious services and with all its superstitious rules and mysteries, which invest it with a grandeur unthought of by those who only know this country, whose people, or the major portion of them, divest the day of those religious services, rules and mysteries, in which divesture I entirely coincide; for I merely view the teachings connected with Christmas Day as an old tradition, which ought not to be looked upon with reverence or awe, but the day should simply be held in honour of the noble man from whom it has derived its name and should be regarded as one of pleasure and social reunion—for the blending together of those friends who may have been separated by the various pursuits of life.

In this country I observe a lack of the holly and mistletoe, a lack which denotes that superstition is not so rampant among this people as with those of the old country, and as time advances from Christmas to Christmas the numbers of devotees of that same superstition will become gradually less. All I can wish you is that every return of this day may find you advanced to a higher state of knowledge and goodness.

Digitized by Google

My last lecture concluded at the point where I came in sight of, and was drawn near to, groups of children. I also found in this garden, where the children were congregated, hosts of spirits assembled. The paths of this garden were laid out most beautifully and scientifically, and its fountains poured forth their glittering streams, emitting the sweetest melody and music, and throwing or spreading a light around the whole of the vast expanse. I was here taken and shown a large building in the form of a circle. It was richly carved and elaborately ornamented in all its parts. While I was wondering and gazing at it one of the old sages approached, and, entering into conversation with me, referred to the school or lyceum, to which purpose this building was devoted. "You have not yet had an opportunity of seeing how these schools are conducted. Here the children are not taught simple rudiments, as it were, but the secrets of their own nature are unfolded to them in such a manner that they are enabled to repel to a safe distance anything inimical to them which may present itself." I wished to enter the building at once, but my wife said that the time had not arrived for the doors to be opened. I had to wait some time ere being admitted. When I did enter the outer portion of the building, I was conducted to a seat, which was formed of a very light and beautiful material, of which I had not observed anything similar in any other part I had heretofore visited. I found everything in the most perfect order, no discord was apparent, but all was in complete harmony. "How would you like to remain here?" said my wife. "There is nothing I would like better," I replied, "than to stamp on the minds of these children that which would benefit them when they grow older (not old in years, but old in knowledge), for the further they rise the brighter they will get." These faculties which now lie dormant will gradually become matured and developed, faculties which are possessed by all young children

Digitized by Google

upon earth, but of which parents knowing nothing never think of cultivating. They simply place them on the same course of study which they went through themselves. There are many faculties that lie dormant in the human mind which will yet emerge from their hiding place and send forth springs of light and life, such as you, until your spirit becomes released from the fleshly body, cannot comprehend.

I then heard sounds coming from outside the walls of this circular building, and a beautiful view opened up before me, which I can only faintly suggest by drawing a simile of the scene you may see on earth on taking a walk when the sun is rising; when the dew glistens on the foliage; when the rose first begins to feel the sun's welcome rays of heat, and expands its leaf; when the leveret and rabbit sport over Nature's mossy carpet; and the rippling stream dashes along, blending its music with that of all Creation's melody. But my utmost powers would fail to impart to you a picture of what I then witnessed. I heard music and singing sounding from all parts, which proceeded from other bands of children as they drew near, and whom I soon found crowding around me. I noticed, as they approached, that some were brighter than others, but all seemed full of tenderness and love; there were no cross looks upon their spirit brows. I saw that there accompanied them what appeared to be a ruler or teacher over each band, at a signal from whom they came forward and stood as if they had been drilled for centuries,—not a foot placed wrong; grace and elegance seemed to be in every movement. I observed that the groups did not mingle, each group having a particular object, which seemed to be known by those only who were of a stronger nature,—that is to say, those who were more matured. The latter carried banners, with mottos on them, while the younger children carried flowers or sprays, which, being borne by innocence, appeared very beautiful. They all formed in order, and as I stood

Digitized by Google

watching them I heard sounds of music coming from a distance, which I could not altogether recognise. I then saw a bright spirit draw near, in his hand I observed he held the keys of the inner apartment of the building, and as the children looked upon him they all sent forth their welcome. I could see by the very robes that decked his form, by the very sceptre that he held in his hand, he had been many centuries in the higher spheres. "Who is he," I whispered. I was told that he was one of the noble reformers; it was he who had laid the foundations of this place of instruction and who had established this Lyceum upon the basis of which it now could boast. Here it was that children from all countries of your earth, and from other climes of which you know not, meet together. This may sound strange to you, but let me say, in passing, that there are planets, seen from your earth, which are inhabited; and, besides, there are many worlds, invisible to you, from which spirits come. He opened the doors of the inner apartment, and the children were admitted first. I stayed without, waiting until the last had entered, when, as I advanced, the doors fell back, and, stepping inside a scene was presented, which I will endeavour to picture to you. I seemed to tread upon a cushioned pavement, along which I felt myself gliding; but the sight before me was so dazzling that I was compelled to stand still for a few moments ere I could grasp the idea of such magnificence. With the rest of the visitors I seated myself, when I perceived that there were as many as forty galleries, and each group of children seemed to be perfectly aware what portion of the building it was to occupy. The galleries were supported by pillars, decorated with various designs of deep colours, the light from which was of such intense brilliancy that it looked like one vast flame of fire, whose brightness rose glittering far above anything that I can describe to you. The most fanciful imagination of the human mind could never draw such a

Digitized by Google

picture—the grandest scenes of Nature witnessed on earth could never bring to your minds the light as it sparkled. The whole accumulation of earth's brightest jewels could never glisten with the transcendent splendour with which that light glistened. The leader, with his sceptre, ascended the platform, and at a given signal there stepped forward six spirits, three on his right and three on his left. He then spoke in the following words :—"It is once in a time that I come here to visit this establishment and the work which I left for others to perpetuate. These bright scenes, my little ones, and you who are more developed, are naught to the scenes I have left behind; but it is with solicitude and love I return here to greet and encourage those, who, by their energies, have crowned this mighty edifice with truth. I see that, as time speeds on, greater grows your strength. You have taken in hand to cultivate the young. Oh! cultivate purity. To this great domain of duty you have called together from many planets the children of those who are left behind, and your instruction not only brightens the order of their minds, but cultivates their intellectual powers. I see before me very many new faces, showing that your industry does not grow lukewarm, but that it is always studying and striving for greater achievements and greater works." He then addressed the children on different subjects, and the precision and accuracy with which each child answered the questions were delightful to listen to. And now they were dismissed, each face radiant with delight and pleasure. I saw that each group took a different direction, leading to those plains to which they belonged and from whence they had come.

My wife then coming forward to me, asked what I had seen. "I have seen very many wondrous and strange things, and I am told there are many more; why do you ask me this question?" "Here is your work," she replied.

Digitized by Google

"You will have to become a teacher of the young. You neglected them while upon earth, and you cannot pass into a higher sphere until you have thoroughly studied them; you cannot raise yourself until you have become as pure in mind as the children you have just beheld." It took me some time to consider this. On earth, the wild animals attend to their young, and are happy—yes, and gay; but man will often—too often—leave his offspring with indifference; in such a case he is worse than the beasts of the field. The mother of the animal will tend, with every care, her little ones; but a selfish woman will sometimes heedlessly thrust her child from her. Does she then expect to find, when death steps in, that the child so discarded will come back to her with open arms? Nay, Nature's laws will not allow it. The animal will lead its offspring out one by one; the bird will teach its young with solicitude how to fly; tremulous sensations will quiver through their little forms; their hearts will palpitate with fear for the safety of their fledglings, for whom they will manifest such anxiety as would do credit to many who occupy a higher position in the scale of being. I found that this was another part I had to answer for, inasmuch as those who pass away, and have neglected their offspring, cannot rest contented in their spirit-life as long as their children are left behind them, knowing that they had not done the best they could for them when in the earthly state. The anguish at times becomes similar to that experienced by a man who has amassed a fortune, which in one weak moment passes from his grasp after all his years of toiling. The feelings of the parent in spirit-life who has neglected his children when upon earth, are somewhat akin to those of the man whose fortune has been swept from him in one brief moment. Until such children have attained a certain standard of elevation, progress, on the part of that parent, is, to a great extent, in a state of abeyance.

Digitized by Google

I was now initiated into the rudimentary stages of teaching children. I had gone to the task at first, not with longing or pleasure, but I soon found that the spiritual heart cannot cast away the sweet blossoms of children's love. They soon reach around you, nestling in your heart, with their prattling tongues, their innocence, and their complete reliance on you. Here I found that I was drawn into my work quietly and gently, and for many years I became an enthusiastic teacher of those little children.

I shall now refer to man's faculties. Here upon earth he is ignorant of governance that may be in his own brain or head, which latter is a curiosity. Even if you cannot see it inwardly it is a curiosity outwardly. There is such an amount of power contained in that structure that we naturally ask from whence and how did it come.

There is also another thing that is constantly bound up in man—that is, Destiny. To a certain extent I will allow of destiny; but destiny, to a man's ruin, I will not.

To behold a man as viewed by us, mentally place him in steam or smoke, and then draw different tinted bright lines starting from the head, and you have the clairvoyant vision of a man or woman. Each man, as we see him, has a light originating at the base of his brain. At first glance it seems to be one huge flame, but a closer scrutiny reveals the fact that the apparent flame is, in reality, composed of minute magnetic threads, which can be traced to higher spheres and to other guidances. Each of these thin threads is drawn forth as wires, and can be worked upon in the same manner as your telegraph wires, and are so used by operators, unseen by, and frequently unknown to, you; so that man often takes the sole credit of that which he has accomplished, when other intelligences have been the means of bringing him to his success. The so-called steam or smoke of which I just made mention as surrounding man's body is what is termed aura—a

Digitized by Google

subtle emanation constantly leaving the frame. Cannot man deduce an instructive lesson from this problem in Nature?—By this invisible (to man) subtle fluid the dog, with surety and accuracy, traces his lost master. In regard to spirit, man's observation—if he would but exercise it—might perceive a fitting analogy in the little thought of matter concerning the dog and his gift—the exercise of which is so unerring.

Referring to the phrenological organs, a student of phrenology—one well conversant in this science—can, in his examination of a head, inform the subject of the particular faculty he has been cultivating. Why? Because he (the subject) has concentrated his energies upon the one idea pertaining to that faculty, or power of his mind, the exercise of which has developed and made the organ sufficiently prominent for the student's discernment. The undue exertion of any one particular faculty enlarges the organical structure of that one power of the mind; so that "he who runs may read." Man, by the concentration of his powers upon one object, may develop the faculty which is in accord with that object, but at the expense of the other faculties, which remain in an imbecile state. The head enclosing such unevenly developed faculties cannot be termed a well-balanced head, for it is in an abnormal state, a state at variance with that for which Nature intended it. A child should be carefully and systematically taught to develop all the faculties of his being.

I have exhausted the Medium; so that I must abruptly terminate my lecture.

(An attempt at an invocation was made, but the powers of the medium failed).

Digitized by Google

LECTURE VII.

DELIVERED 29TH DECEMBER, 1874.

GOOD EVENING. I shall now draw your attention to where we left off when last assembled here, not having altogether finished the subject in consequence of the power being so weak, and the Medium being so utterly exhausted, which compelled me to make a quick exit.

The whole head is affected by the development of the various faculties, for, as a modern writer truly observes, "the brain grows to the manner of its using;" the body also is brought under the influence of the faculties cultivated. Everyone who has contemplated the human family, savage or civilised, has had this immediately made known to his senses. It is well known, too, that certain faculties can be either repressed by disuse or brought more forward by development than others; and it is also true that the whole body is governed by the head, or by the power of the brain. If you wish to walk your brain thinks of it before the action takes place; so that the brain is closely connected with the whole frame. In too many cases man's system of educating the young has ignored this fact, consequently the superstitious teachers of the young have endeavoured to cultivate in their pupils those faculties conducive to fear, awe, and credulity, instead of trying to develop the leading or moral faculties, from which misdirection ensues the deplorable fact that what they have been taught becomes their leading passion or habit. Habits are gathered when young, and everyone knows that no matter how trifling a habit may be, yet, if unchecked, it fastens itself upon him with such strong ties that the greatest and firmest resolution

Digitized by Google

is necessary to enable its victim to cast it off. Such a habit may be called, or classed as "Second Nature."

Here, then, is important teaching for all fathers and mothers responsible for the care of the faculties of the young. By cultivating that which is good and noble, and which the child shows a taste for, he will naturally develop the art of duty before inutility. When once by this teaching kindness becomes a distinctive feature in his organisation, it naturally presses back the vice which would otherwise become prominent so that each development of the faculties should be viewed in a spiritual way, or from a spiritual stand-point. Behold a man's head, or a child's head, how wonderful the mechanism! It contains such hidden secrets,—such beauty,—such a wondrous assemblage of organs, that man's grandest and ablest works fall immeasurably low in the scale when compared with the power and harmony manifest in this glorious work of God.

I shall now analyse on the other side. Let us examine drunkenness, and also the state of the spirit arising from the body after its having been made a receptacle of excessive potations. Before doing so, however, I shall take the case of those who have had, what you term here, a diseased mind, and this will be the last in the present sphere.

There is some peculiar refinement in man's organisation which enables him to partially comprehend these things. But how far is he from having found the "Philosopher's stone!" How deep is it hidden from his penetration! How far away is the cause from the part where he looks, and the cure from where he seeks to find it!

Many who have investigated this subject have declared that there are people upon this earth whose brains are so greatly diseased that when they leave this world their mind will be tinctured with that malady which oppressed it here, but that it will be cleansed or revivified after death. I shall try and

Digitized by Google

make you thoroughly understand this subject, as well as those who may read it.

A spirit that is in the body of a person who is mad—as an aberration of intellect is designated by those who are supposed to be deep in the knowledge of pathology—lies much in this manner, viz., like a watch or clock whose case is very well to look at, but whose works are not perfect. If one part or particle of this edifice of man is in the slightest degree oppressed or disarranged, the whole is impaired or deranged. Now, let us analyze madness. We will place it in three distinct classes. There is the madness originated by the overwrought brain, which, as soon as released from the body, and strength has been brought to the spirit, immediately recovers, because it was the organisation that was oppressed and not the spirit. This has been brought on by the brain having been overworked and imposed upon—much as you would take a sponge and fill it with water, gorging it out almost beyond its power of absorption. The brain has been used like a sponge filled to repletion, and it cannot possibly receive the bright impressions any longer until it has been purified and strengthened

But there is a second class of madmen, viz., those who are born idiots; they receive it with their birth. But why do they inherit it? Where does it come from? Does it lie in the father and mother? Sometimes it does; but in what manner? Here the brain and spirit are not in perfect harmony; the organs are perfect, but the spirit can make no use of them. The older the child grows the greater becomes the deformity; the brain cannot travel with any rapidity; the lightning touches with which actions in other mortals' brains are brought to such a state of perfection fail here altogether. It is like this—The idiot's brain is soft and devoid of elasticity, and directly the impression is placed on it the result is very much the same as that from the pressure by

Digitized by Google

your finger on a piece of dough. The impression is there, but it rests there; it cannot be conveyed through the organisation. The brain might have been injured before the birth of its possessor; or, coming into the world in a state of perfection, it may have received, by various means, a certain stroke, the effects of which it could not succeed in throwing off. Now, what is the state awaiting spirits of this description after death? They require a new birth. The organs of perception are dull, and the brain must be placed in such a position that the organs, which have been so long cramped in the body, may be quickened to a more lightning speed of action. Lastly, there is the madman whose insanity has been induced by crime, or remorse preying on his mind. This is like a canker-worm eating into the whole system, which cannot be eradicated or cured while upon this earth. It is like a cancer, whose roots spread out gradually, seeking and devouring its victim's blood. What cure is there for this? None whilst in the body. It is one of the most fearful forms of madness, and yet how little understood! The victims of other phases of insanity can often be brought out of the cloud which envelops their intellects by the exercise of strong mesmeric power on the part of an operator, yet this power is still ignored by those in charge of the insane.

Now, we will take them as we see them in the spheres. I was taken by one, who had devoted a life-study to the subject of insanity, and shown a sufferer from this sad affliction, one belonging to the first class I mentioned. I noticed that a sort of cloud hung around him, and his eyes were cast down. He seemed to be oppressed with the terrible thought that his brain was no clearer than when he left the earth; and to make the attempt at the recovery of his ideas he took up the thread of his life exactly where he first had become mystified or in a cloud. These cases are generally easily got over. In the second class instanced, the organs of

Digitized by Google

the body having remained so long dormant, great difficulty is experienced in bringing them to the proper light. In this case here was one whose organs seemed helplessly obscured; the head, when looked at internally, appeared flattened, and the brain presented a similar appearance. A circle of six spirits was formed around him, and from one of the circle was conveyed a strong magnetic light upon the brain. This operation was repeated several times, and at each renewal the light thrown upon the subject was increased in intensity, and the brain gradually assumed a lightness it had never before possessed. Now, as to the form or spiritual body of this subject, it was in just the same haggard state as the shell it had left behind, which you may have observed in similar cases is conspicuous for its high and prominent shoulders, and a lassitude lingering over the whole of the body. Wherever the deformity existed some process was brought to bear upon it; the leader of the circle, placing his hand upon the shoulder, conveyed a quick, shooting spark of magnetism, which drew it into a more symmetrical form. This process will indicate the reason for the many cures which have been accomplished by mediums. Now here is the third and worst example,—the one into whom the disease has really eaten. He was vicious. His form of madness was that of destruction, which faculty he may have possessed largely when a boy upon earth, but if that faculty had been repressed and made to give way to others, who knows what higher standard he might have reached! Then this cankering worm could have been kept out of the system, and he would not have had to yield to those evil passions which came within range and gained sway over him.

The subjects pertaining to this class are perfectly restless in spirit-life, to modify which they are put into a mesmeric trance, or, what we term, a spiritual sleep; when they are taken and placed upon a couch, tended by the strongest spirits,

Digitized by Google

magnetically, who can be found. Now there is great difficulty here, for, sometimes the refractory spirit will break away and assume an outrageous state, the interior as well as the exterior workings of which can be perceived. I shall never forget the one I first saw. He seemed to be ground down by remorse; yet a flashing of light, which would be constantly coming upon him,—being brought by other spiritual agencies,—seemed to make him more bitter, more wild, and the passions seemed to chase through him as the brain became gradually enlightened. I have seen spirits fall weak from exhaustion in their endeavours to restrain, magnetically, a refractory subject of this stamp. I have seen the latter, after he has broken away from this power of will, rush fiercely over mountains and over lands, as you may have seen a madman who has escaped from one of your asylums. His first object was to try and baffle his pursuers, who cannot grasp and bring him back by physical means, as upon earth, but he must be reclaimed by conciliatory means, which are abundantly strong in those who take upon themselves this office. I have seen the hair of a refractory spirit stand erect, his whole frame "pricking like pins and needles." How is this state brought to a climax? Much in this manner: When, at last, the light begins to beam again upon his intellect, as a rule, he immediately begins to speak of his earth-life, at the time he lost his senses or his recollections. He recounts the various stages of madness in his life. I have heard those who were considered insane, in their more lucid moments speaking some of the loftiest ideas,—some of the grandest language,—language which would redound to the credit of one of your most eloquent orators.

I will now illustrate the case of one who always when upon earth personated a king. Even when death had closed his earthly sight, and all was dark as night, there seemed a rumbling in his ears as waves splashing over his body. His senses seemed to pass away, and when he awoke he still

Digitized by Google

thought he was a king. He spoke of the crown that adorned his brow, enriched with splendid jewels, and of his treasures which the courtiers displayed that everyone might look on as they passed by. I have seen him gnash his teeth at times like a lion in his cage. I have heard him speak to those assembled around him,—and friends some of them were,—and say—"Canst thou not remember what we were when we lived upon earth?" Scenes to him have not been changed, so long was he oppressed with the dreadful malady, that time is lost in darkness to him. I have heard him speak, too, language which he perfectly understood, but which, to those who listened seemed a mystery. Even some of the most sublime ideas that emanate from the brightest and purest of minds, escaped from him, just as is frequently the case with these poor madmen, as they are called, who on earth were, until their reason became overturned, possessed with the brightest intellect.

Drink I will class on two sides. There is the hereditary drunkard, one who was born for it, seemed to have sucked or inhaled it with his mother's milk, and his organisation is so adapted to it that it is his life—his death!

There is another class who are brought into it by gaiety, who are easily led away in the society of others, and who are drawn in as the ship into the centre of the whirlpool. (Not very pleasant this; it is raking up old sores, and the wound never heals when such an earthly bane is brought in contact with it. It brings it to the imagination, and one would fain break away and sink into space and oblivion.)*

As the Spirit "Time"† remarked last night (I cannot recollect so as to bring his exact words through the medium):

* This remark referred specially to what the control had on a former occasion told about his own passing from earth.

† A spirit who, through the medium of Harris, lectures publicly each Sunday evening. This spirit when in the body was an Englishman, and stated he lived 400 years ago.

Digitized by Google

"Some men are like meteors, they shine for a time like the brilliant stars, whose radiance strike upon your sight when you look up at them." Yes, some of the greatest men of science that have ever adorned the world have been cramped and ruined by drink. They have just for a moment lit up with a transient flash the minds of those with whom they came in contact. Some of them only momentarily flared with splendid show, as a shooting star does over your sky, and passed away to an early grave, through drink. Some of the finest brains have never been made use of, in consequence of drink. This is bad; yet it all arises from man not studying the organisation of his own body. Instead of holding in restraint those passions of his lower nature, which will impoison his mind, he gives them free scope, and degradation ensues. The beasts of the field will not, as a rule, eat too much; if so, they suffer. If man will do worse, and impair or lose his intellect through excess, what cure is there for it? He is worse than the beast, who lacks that reason with which man is endowed—reason which should enable him to curb and restrain his passions. This is one of the worst forms of drunkenness. It is not simply when passing away that the spirit is hurt; but every year that he lives upon earth those disastrous influences are diseasing the spirit as well as the body. No man would injure the chrysalis of a poor moth, and expect to see the moth emerge in a perfect state. Can he, therefore, reasonably expect a spirit to step forth untainted and intact from a body which has been for years abused? The dregs of that body will cling to the spirit until they have been—as Nature demands—properly cleansed. Nature's laws inexorably claim that, if a man abuse his body, his spirit must suffer for it. Why? Because the body is governed by natural laws; and if the organs pertaining to that body have been hurt or injured, the spirit, by the eternal laws of cause and effect, is thereby also injured.

Digitized by Google

But even a worse class of drunkards are those men whose education, whose position in life, and every other advantage, enabled them to thoroughly understand the ruination of excess of this kind, and have yet fallen into its snares. I cannot class these with those who, in encountering the vicissitudes of life, having had no education, and who, having exhausted their physical strength with their work, have, in the evening after their laborious exertions of the day, sought that false-recruiting medicine, and thereby became so fond of it, and imbibed such quantities that their bodies have suffered. These cannot be placed on the same plane with those of the other class. Reason demands that it cannot be so. Every person who is thus inclined will, if taken in hand when young, and made to restrain those passions, gradually find that he will eventually master them; but if he allows himself to be led, or drawn in, by company, then, indeed, is he in danger of being engulfed in the vortex of dissipation. (Here let us take the case of one who has been a drunkard for many years, who has lived long, drinking in, deep, the poison. Upon his features—somewhat of the lower grade of human type—you can perceive the marks left by the powerful and insidious beverage, whose effects have so vitiated the blood that the very flesh is changed to an unnatural colour. The head, too, is affected, and the vapours of the drink, when they leave the bodily frame, seem, to the clairvoyant, to rise in different coloured flames—flames that have kept the organisation upon the rack. We will now watch the spirit rise as the sleep of death sets in. See what a valiant struggle the human frame makes when the crisis comes! What darkness it doth hold! more intense than the darkness of night. See! the two shoulders begin to rise; there is a soul about to be launched into another world or domain of Nature. See how the spirit form is cramped and contracted! 'Tis the poison which has done this. The organs that should be vivid and sparkling, after the separation of

Digitized by Google

spirit and body, lie dormant. Yes, it is the drink! Let us now see how he is taken in hand. The spirits, who have come for this purpose, place him in a basket—or what you would term such—in which he is tenderly borne away. See! what a cloud, like a pall, hangs around that which should have been bright and lustrous! Alas! brightness and darkness can never be combined. He awakes—"drink" is his cry; but there is now no drink, of the nature he desires, to stimulate him; there is no drink to lend motive-strength to his spiritual organisation. Time alone will wean him from the debasement—time and his own good purpose must restore him to the state he should occupy. Watch him how he turns and writhes; and in his frenzied haste, at last he rushes to the fountain, and though the silvery waters play in music, no charm have they for his ear; for it is alcohol he searches for—it is the poison-thirst of his earthly life that is still burning within him.

But I shall now take a different case. Here is a man who has taken a glass in moderation when his desires prompted him. No teetotaller; on the contrary, one who has enjoyed with thankfulness this and other of God's gifts to man—one who has used, but not abused, the luxuries of life. I watch, and lo! a spirit bright and clear comes forth with a refulgent halo around it. The form comes away without any difficulty; and the influences surrounding it become far clearer and brighter as it gains strength. There is a little struggle as the connecting link between the spirit and body is about being severed; the influence is broken! The spirit can no longer tarry with the body—the cord is divided—all is o'er! The eye is opened, and it beholds the shell or chrysalis from which it has just emerged. "You," I see, "are overwhelmed by the sight of the body you have left behind. Trouble not yourself about that which, having served its purpose, you require no more, but you must wait until some kind spirit-friend

Digitized by Google

comes to take you away from this scene. Ha! you have not long to wait. for here are your loving friends who have come to lead you gently to your spirit-home."

(A pause having occurred here, one of the circle, thinking the lecture concluded, said he would have very much liked to receive an explanation of some statements made in a previous lecture about the stars as seen from the spirit-world. This was at once complied with. At its conclusion another pause ensued. after which the following disconnected statements were uttered through the still entranced medium) :—

My mind having been concentred for a brief space on those glittering stars, compared with which the planets as seen from earth are small indeed, the comparison of the two caused my thoughts to break forth in the following words :—"Ah! now, as I stand upon the margin of space and time. with the marvellous beauties that I see around me, crowned by these sparkling stars and refulgent worlds, how much mightier and more glorious is the spiritual to the physical domain of Nature. How much more melodious are the warblings of the one compared to those of the other. How much grander are the scenes here than those of the earth sphere!"

After another short pause came the following :—

Countless visions of scenery, beautiful and bright, passed before me as I reclined in the magnetic sleep. This was one step higher, and I was soon made aware that I should rise higher; not higher in your meaning of the word, because here there is no such thing. I merely use the word "higher" in reference to the superiority of one sphere over the other to convey to your minds a definite idea.

Watch the change! And thus as I stood upon this fairer land the clouds seemed to open with beauty, and music to sound. There appeared to be borne by the gentle breezes, that spread mantling over everything, a gorgeous array. Night there was none, and all was as clear as the day.

Digitized by Google

I then felt an influence as if something were drawing nigh, and I saw a spirit whose glittering brightness dazzled the sight. She by the hand did take me, saying—"To earth we will go, and there behold the scenes that lie beyond." The garments that decked her were as white as snow. She seemed to be enveloped in a white luminous cloud, and hundreds of spirits attended her. She beckoned to and encouraged the masses that were struggling on. In her hands she held what appeared to be the keys of the mystery, and thus she spoke: "Dost thou see that world? It is the one you once lived on." Then down to earth we went, and each head of the human race we saw we touched through the unity of the magnetic tie, and in the bodies of those who were influenced by the contact, the light seemed to develop. Addressing me, she said—"This is your duty; return, when you can, with the knowledge you have gained and the instruments you have found; then shall you use them and combat the proud theology of the world. Thus shall you break down superstition. You see the dark clouds around; they must be dispelled! This dark and dreary cloud must be torn asunder! Vast is the undertaking; deep-rooted the superstition; therefore, time will be required to perform it,—time will be required to eradicate it. Here! Behold how man has toiled; see how he thinks and tries hard to pierce into the future and yet remains baffled. We shall return, when the proper time arrives and we will unlock the intellects of the human family." I then heard music, and I was gently drawn or wafted away back to my spiritual home.

Even these were peeps into the vast and wondrous workings of the future,—a future which promises an infinite ocean of light and love.

'Tis not by a church estimate of the Great Spirit. 'Tis not by an adherence to its teachings and sayings, that the sovereign attributes of the All-wise, the All-good, the All-

Digitized by Google

mighty, can be realised; but 'tis by an earnest and true estimate of Nature and Her Laws,—laws which tell us that He lives, and how He must inevitably and immutably act, —that we are brought nearer to that Ruler, of Whom the grandest conception of man's mind and heart falls far short of the reality! Whose glorious name is sounded forth through all worlds independent of man's agency. How can man disbelieve when he has received intelligence from its Source, and is thereby drawn to Him by the ties of affinity? How mean, how low hath been man's conception of Deity! How, or in what manner has it been brought about that his estimate of Him has been so mean and low? Simply and culpably through allowing his reason—that inestimable gift —to remain in a state of abeyance, instead of exercising it, as was intended by its donor, and (as I heard one read) "Looking from Nature, up to Nature's God" He who fills immensity stands revealed in all His Glory, shadowing forth in striking beauty all creation, the thought of which should awaken in each heart a throbbing sensation, bringing it nearer to that loving Father who brought it into existence. How can the materialist avoid Nature's laws by throwing them aside? In some instances he does so temporarily, but this arises from his allowing his animal nature to rule over his spiritual or higher nature. Not so, however, with his mentality, for after receiving *that* germ that can never pass away, it will yet rise ever brighter and brighter, till, at last, it leaps creation, and rushes forth through mists and clouds, stars, and world's unbounded, nearer and nearer to the great Ruler of All. Good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE VIII.

DELIVERED 2ND JANUARY, 1875.

GOOD EVENING. Previous to starting on the discourse of the evening I wish you to understand that, when you are revising or looking over these lectures, you will find sometimes that there has been a lack or omission, such as occurred in the last lecture. For instance, if we take in hand the classing of different subjects into numbers—one, two, three, &c., and the medium is not in first-class order, we are apt to impress the wrong number upon his brain; it is as likely that number two will come forth when one of the other numbers should be spoken. So that lines the sense of which does not blend together, and cannot readily be understood, strike out, or at the following seance let us know the sentence or paragraph. The impressions are sometimes placed four or five times upon the brain of the medium, whereas two only may reach your organs of hearing.

The laws which govern man are also, in a certain light, but in a higher state, made to govern the spirit. Man, through his rough coating or frame, cannot perceive that the same laws operate on the two. A spirit passing from the second to the third sphere finds that changes have to come over it ere it can enter the latter. If you take anything that is foul or filthy, and, for the purpose of cleansing it, pass it through different courses of pure water, you will find that it finally becomes clean—leaving its dregs behind. I found, when I was about to depart from the home where I had lived for some time, that my perceptions were more acute, that my sensations were much finer, that my aerial feelings for

Digitized by Google

encountering climatic changes were much lighter, and that there was a difference in my weight (to put it in earthly words). I felt as if I had lost something which I had brought with me into that sphere. No feelings of rejoicing stirred within me at my departure, for I had been so long associated with, and attached to, various grades, that it was almost like a friend leaving his earthly relations to pass away into the spheres. But still there was not that feeling which is present when death steps in upon man's intellect, closing the eyes, and making all outside without animation, leaving only the cold form to see. That doubt was taken away—knowing that beyond where I had been living or staying there were other worlds, and I was told that I could often return to this sphere. But, still, I felt "alone in my loneliness," and a feeling akin to dread took hold of me when I was about to step into a higher sphere. I turned to those around me, and thus a few parting words did say:—"I am about to leave you, and with regret. Many wondrous things have I seen in a brief space of time. I will not forget thee, thou spirits, who will yet follow on the path which I am now about to take."

My wife, who had come for me, and with whom I was now to be partially associated, taking me by the hand led me to a place where we had previously tarried for some time. I then saw a bright and glorious spirit, who was enrobed in raiment without stitch or seam, which appeared to enfold a perfectly symmetrical and graceful being. Lights hung around her head and shoulders, and a halo extended from her to myself. I felt her influence overcoming me, and I hoped that the sleep of innocence, without a cloud, without the feeling of pain, would possess me. But I cannot hope to bring to your minds the feelings which I then experienced. They were dissimilar to those which I felt when I parted from earth—when the spirit was leaving the body. I was cast into a profound slumber—a slumber so deep that some time elapsed—I could not

Digitized by Google

say how long—before I awoke; but when I did I found that I was in what I may term a car, and moving steadily forward, so steadily that it reminded me of the motion pertaining to a canoe urged over silvery placid water. I also noticed that she, whose influences I had felt, as stated, was what you may term conductress or leader. I was again placed under the influence of sleep, and, when I awoke, I heard music, whose delicious strains far surpassed in beauty anything I had ever heard. I turned to see if she who had been so faithful to me in earth-life was near me, and I was rejoiced to find that she was. We drew near to what you would term the sky; but very different to the sky surrounding your earth. Its colour was of a delicate blue, the natural brilliancy of which seemed to send out a light that imparted to the whole expanse a colouring of the most striking description. When we were passing through, it appeared like an ethereal cloud, and I found that the influence previously felt was wholly thrown aside from me. I avoided thought as much as possible apart from the charming scene I then beheld. Many who read this description will fancy that it emanates from a diseased brain or imagination. Such, however, is not the case. We seemed to be suspended in a perfect sphere, but yet moving with an impulse that I could not possibly fathom. Our rapid transit soon brought another change upon us, and the ethereal cloud, through which we had been passing, gave place to an element resembling vapour or steam. We passed through this, and then a heaven awoke upon my spiritual sight! Cities, towns, worlds, which appeared to be floating with the clouds in the air! Their foundations, however, stood on something soft and beautiful, and altogether they seemed to me too deifically sublime to have been built by even spirit hands.

I was immediately drawn by an irresistible impulse into the company of a number of my friends. I was taken by

Digitized by Google

the hand and great was the rejoicing. My old sensation of curiosity soon stirred within me once again, causing me to exclaim, though not in words—"Oh! earth, thou hast not yet taken all that did belong to thee." I was quietly led along a path which was studded on each side by the finest gatherings that Nature could possibly have made. There seemed to be every description of animals collected here, frisking with and chasing each other in the utmost delight.* The flowers hung around, emitting the most fragrant perfume. We walked through groves and over hills and valleys, and, so great became the power of my vision that I was enabled to see objects hundreds of miles distant! But here my senses were completely absorbed by the almost illimitable and grand view which I then commanded, as man's do sometimes, when he finds himself in the quiet scenes of Nature hitherto untouched by his fellow beings. The almost boundless landscape was so enchanting that the most beautiful pictures of Nature upon earth can convey no idea of its loveliness. The hills seemed transparent—like crystal—yet solid, and streaks of effulgent light intermingled with the prevailing blue colour of the extended prospect. I turned my vision upward and I saw the glowing mighty gems which you call stars, but, from my point of view they appeared so close that I could perceive the union that existed between them. From the contemplation of these, in which I had become lost, my attention was diverted by a gentle touch upon the shoulder, and, whom should I see before me but the old sage, who had acted so kindly to me in the second sphere, and who wished to learn whether my earthly curiosity had left me. He said:

* On being asked if these animals were the spirits of animals that had once lived on the earth, the reply was "No, although in some respects they resembled some of the animals of earth, they are evidently indigenous to this sphere.'

Digitized by Google

"Thou seest wonders, but I will show thee greater scenes and marvels yet—aye, wonders and marvels you have never dreamt of; but thou wilt have to assume all thy spiritual perceptions to at once realise the truth of even a portion of what you will behold—saturated, as you have been, with that absurd superstition of earth. And forget not, when the opportunity arises for you to return, to acknowledge what you have learned. Do you find your spiritual senses clear, and can you convey your thoughts to others without any difficulty in expressing them?" "I do; I can," I replied. "How is it," he resumed, "that I can pierce through your inward being, and there perceive that the progress of your mind is like that of a stranger in a strange country? The longer you stay in these spheres, the higher will you reach. The more of the spirit laws you see, the more you will understand the agency which governs them. In your crude and rough state upon earth, you saw only the outward manifestations of Nature's laws; but now you are beginning to comprehend their inward workings. You are yet a child at the very alphabet of spiritual knowledge, and have an immense deal to learn before you can read those laws which govern yon meteors flashing through the sky above your head. You can see the effect of Nature's laws, but you understand them not." "But," said I, "now the amazing links begin to come to my spiritual intellect, I can perceive that each planet derives a strength and benefit from its neighbour." "Yes, friend, and you perceive aright; and you also derive influence from those with whom you consort. Yes, the more you associate with the higher intelligences, the more perfect you will become as an individual. They are natural laws which regulate such results—laws which will ensure your receiving benefits from the study of their operation. And as each planet—or so-called planet (for all stars are planets in the sense of being wanderers or moving bodies)—receives an influence from its brother planet;

Digitized by Google

so you have been, though a stranger, deriving a benefit from a spiritual source, which is as yet an enigma to you. Beyond these worlds, my friend, there is a ladder whose steps you have not counted, whose end and way you know not. You will have to tarry here, and do as you have done before—wait, and patience will reward you." Suddenly I was surrounded by a band of old and particular friends, whose names I had reverenced when upon earth, and from whom I had received only short messages when sojourning in the second sphere. But here we were brought together by the bonds and ties of affinity.

I found no difficulty in finding my friends here, because the laws of my spiritual existence had now become so far developed that I was intuitively drawn to them. I observed that spirits here were congregated together in bands of numbers varying from 50,000 to 100,000! Now, if you will reflect and throw your mind back to what I described as ruling in the second sphere, you will recollect that I told you that there all the spirits seemed to be of different grades, and a clannishness existed which kept those grades apart. But here it was different; each grade seemed to be brought together by the power of faith or confidence, generated by contact with refined company and substances. He who is of the superstitious Christian's mind upon earth cannot enjoy the society of intellects which are rationally and liberally educated, because he cannot understand them. So it is in the sphere which I have described to you, where, with their cramped notions, the inhabitants cannot comprehend the more liberal ideas of advanced spirits; and, therefore, they are of a more divided sort. Like the flowers of your earth—the varieties of which are so numerous that it occupies the brains of your best botanists to get a thorough understanding of them all—so it is in the second sphere in regard to its people. But here no such great diversity exists, because each spirit is thoroughly *en*

Digitized by Google

rapport with every other spirit surrounding him, except it be in the case of those brought here temporarily for a purpose. I felt that there was a great deal to learn, compared with which my past knowledge and experience would be insignificant, when the vast robes and curtains that seemed to enfold the works of Deity had been drawn aside. I was told that it was only by the aid and teaching of the brighter spirits, and by drinking of the pure fountain of knowledge, that a higher and more blissful state could be attained. I noticed that all the animals of this sphere seemed of a more refined character. The beauty of the music was beyond the powers of conception, and the singing truly delicious. The time appeared to me to be perfect, but I was told that it was not so.

The old sage, again addressing me, said, "Come, friend, I will lead you forth into such scenes as you could never imagine to have existed." Then all the old sensation of curiosity again arose within me, and my whole being was overcome with awe. He conducted me to what seemed like an open pavilion, and from that pavilion we descended white and glistening steps. Having concluded the descent I there met spirits of different grades, some of whom had lived upon earth in my time, but with whom I was unacquainted, and others who had passed away from earth before I had appeared upon it. We passed on until we came to a balcony, which was suspended by beautiful wires interlaced and drawn over each other. As I said before, in reference to the towns, cities, and worlds being apparently founded upon something of a nature soft and beautiful, so were the foundations of this pavilion of a nature so velvety that it imparted a lightness to my step. Upon each side there were magnificent specimens of sculpture, and pictures of the grandest scenes. We then entered a garden, where I beheld a scene that riveted my attention. It was here that the noble Reformer first trod with his spiritual feet; it was here that loud peals of music sounded which reverberated from sphere

Digitized by Google

to sphere; it was here that the loud rumbling was heard when he passed away; it was here that the weary and forlorn one sped; it was here where the new-born spirit was brought to rest; it was here, into this glade of flowers, he was first brought after death.

We proceeded a little further into the garden, of which I will try and give you a description. I shall merely take a rough estimate, and say that it was, by your earthly measurement, about forty miles in length, and about thirty miles in width. I noticed that, in various parts of this garden, different kinds of old carvings were suspended, and, among others, I observed those of the Jews. Everything that was most precious seemed to have been collected in this garden, the decorations of which were most beautiful. The lovely flowers were entwined with each other, and fell over in beautiful idleness, appearing to rest for support on their neighbours. Into this enchanting place we entered hand in hand. I noticed that houses were grouped about in different parts of the garden; they were of diversified colours, and appeared to be built of pearl and ivory. Wreaths of plants and flowers embellished these houses by entwining themselves around and over them, imparting an aspect of inexpressible beauty. We were allowed to ramble about these delightful parterres, without any restrictions being imposed upon us. As we sped along I noticed a large adornment in the form of a cross, upon which was inscribed, "Jesus of Nazareth." This was the spot to which they brought him when the agony of the cross was o'er. I little thought to find this in such a place. This is where the sad mistake has been made by many spirits, who ave just had a glimpse of this, and, without receiving any explanation, have rushed off to their companions in the second sphere, and recounted the fact of having seen this cruciform memento. And thus it is that Christ is worshipped by many as Deity; when he should be merely looked upon as one

Digitized by Google

who devoted himself entirely to his Father's works. I noticed, also, that, upon the lower part of this cross was written, (inscribed, I was informed, by Jesus' own hands)—"He that worshippeth me, worshippeth me wrongly, but should rather worship the Father through his actions." This cross was surrounded by a fountain, whose waters prevented it being touched or destroyed. There it remains, and its brief history I will give you, as given to me. There was an old sage, who had been for many hundreds of years the ruler of this place I met him as he came forward towards us, and I said—"Friend! of all the scenes I have beheld in the spheres—in the different grades I have passed through—of all the sights which have enraptured my spiritual senses, this monument has left the most profound impression. Canst thou tell me how it was placed there? Is its presence the mere outcome of superstition? or is it placed there as an emblem of the Great Reformer's sufferings?" Thus he spoke to me: "When Jesus was upon earth—full well you know—he accomplished more acts of justice and self denial than ever man did before, or is likely to do again. He, in passing away, suffered a death, by which one of Nature's laws was violated. His death was murder, and you are well aware that the spirit must for a time suffer from such consequences. When he arrived upon this ground, there was the lazar-house, to which he was brought. His spirit was destitute of light; all seemed dark and cloudy. For weeks were we trying to bring him into spiritual consciousness, and to animate his spiritual form. Thousands of the noblest martyrs graced this spot where thou dost stand — many of whom had left imperishable monuments behind — felt sad, indeed, when they looked upon the face of him who had been so gentle and so kind. They stood with awe upon this spot and sorrowfully thought of the unjust and cruel treatment of earth's inhabitants, perpetrated towards this most exemplary man.

Digitized by Google

As you visit the old battle fields and think of your ancestors—

> Whose valour was made plain
> To defend their country's name—

Whose swords were drawn, and who freely shed their blood for you; when you are reminded of this you reverence the memory of those ancestors. And I say to you, that this very ground —which is the most sacred in this sphere (where all is sacred) —is reverenced, not because Deity was brought here—but because it was the first resting-place of the great Exemplar of mankind after quitting that earth, whose inhabitants were so unworthy of him. It was here that thousands of spirits watched and waited; it was an anxious watching, an anxious waiting. I shall never forget that time of our solicitous watching. Every sign of restoration was critically examined, and the result telegraphed (for so I will term it) from sphere to sphere; so that each spirit in the vast realms might know how the worthy one progressed. His spirit at last shone forth with resplendent beauty, and he recommenced those teachings, for the promulgation of which upon earth he was so outrageously treated. It was here he again spoke volumes in the language which, when upon earth, he was so accomplished in. It was here that many thousands gathered, determined to bring these efforts into every spirit's recollection. Oh! my friend; contemplate, for a moment, the actions—even as recorded only—of this peerless man; and say, was he not entitled to the esteem which resulted in the erection of this monument? Had you and I performed any actions at all commensurate with those of the man for whom this monument has been raised, then, indeed, we would have been paid most grandly. But, behold that cross! Twenty years of earthly time were occupied in erecting it. It was carved out of jaspar, as you can see; and those words, by Christ's own hands, were placed upon it, as you read. It was determined that

Digitized by Google

this monument should be placed there so that each one might know where Jesus stood, not as a God, however; but in the power of a spirit purer than many who have been thousands of years in the spheres. It is there for you to look at, that you may be incited to good actions, and reverence it for what it is worth."

This was the first time that Jesus of Nazareth had come across my spiritual thoughts. I had been too busily engaged studying the works of Nature to pay much attention to such a subject, and when I found that all things were not true that I had been believing in, I did not give the biblical teachings much time or thought. I was sanguine of finding a Bible in Nature's works; the starry firmament for a God instead of Christ, martyrs, or anything else, similar. Here, however, I found that he who was of a pure, simple, lowly mind, had a monument that was worth more than all that I could count upon earth. I found that his name here was a lisp upon every child's mouth.

In this sphere I perceived that everything was of a divine and holy perfectness, and of child-like simplicity and innocence. No outward discordance or inward wrangle was perceivable, all being in a most beautiful form. I endeavoured to ascertain what was good and what was bad. But how was I to start? No little difficulty seemed to be in my way. The old sage was the only one who appeared to cling specially to this spiritual ground, and to him I had recourse. Addressing him I said, "Spirit! thou hast been here so many years, centuries seem to have rolled over thy hoary head; the staff in thy hand resembles a magic wand. Canst thou tell me if the teachings which Christ left behind on Mother earth were all true? "Oh! man," he replied, "what wert thou upon earth but a mere gathering of the fragments left of atoms! From atoms are substances produced, such as sandhills and mountains; and this earth becomes a man, and they worship

Digitized by Google

him! Jesus I saw here, and for many years I was in his company. Naught did he teach here, friend, from which any one could infer that he considered himself Deity, or above his fellows. But in his life here, as well as upon earth, he has left traces of his sublime character. See here, friend! Hadst thou, when upon earth, exercised thy understanding—as was expected of thee—thou wouldst have known Christ by his works, divesting him of that which he never contemplated of assuming. The mistake is a wondrous mistake! They made him what he never claimed to be; crowned him with a crown; made three in one, placing them hand in hand; and this, instead of being understood by your earthly brothers and sisters, only tended to mystify and degrade them. The laws that God, your Father, teaches you from His works are simple; and where, in them, can you perceive that which leads you to draw the inference that either 'Son' or 'Holy Ghost' enjoys a co-partnership with Him? Deity is one, and, therefore, can claim no relationship with three."

In drawing this evening's lecture to a close, I would observe that it has not been the most favourable night for manifestations; and I would add that I miss greatly the power of the lady* who is absent from the circle, and it will give us much pleasure to have her back again.

I heard the following prayer as I lately reclined against one of the trees in the garden of which I have just spoken; and as I have the child who uttered it with me, I will speak it—impressed by her—through the medium:—

"When I knelt down, or rather felt inspired to lift my mind to my kind Father, little ones, close around me, stood, and listened to my prayer.

"Oh! Deity, Thou gentle, loving Parent! Thy Love I feel within my bosom flowing. Thou hast told me through Thy

* Mrs. Browne, whose health necessitated a change.

Digitized by Google

works that I will see Thee. I have looked—yes, looked, in vain. I cannot picture Thee, and I think that Thy Life is more great and vivid than a spirit child can comprehend or know. And yet I feel an influence that wafts me to Thee. Oh! it is not in one particular thing or another that I see Thee. No! I see Thee in everything—in the flower, in the tree, in the rock, in the brook, I there can see Thee; in the birds that fly around me I there do behold Thee. I feel, Oh! Father, that Thou are not seated on a throne decked in white array, but that Thou art everywhere present, and that everything in Nature feels Thy divine glow. Lustres bright do deck the heavens that I have seen, but I am softly told by those who know more than I do that Thou dost not linger there; that except in Thy glorious works I can never behold Thee. But still I know that Thou art always close to and surrounding me. Thy works tell me how little I do know of Thee. If Thou wouldst but take me by the hand, and lead me over these little troubles of my spirit-life—if I could only worship Thee in view of Thy Glorious Self—if I could but see Thee as Thou art, and behold Thine infinite Universe—then, indeed, I might understand Thee.' Good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE IX.

DELIVERED 5TH JANUARY, 1875.

GOOD EVENING. The last scene where I left you was in the garden, where I pictured to you the monument of the cross which I beheld. To-night I shall relate to you the various descriptions and classes of spirits whom I met there.

From the monument I then beheld we passed towards what might be termed the border of the garden, which was enclosed by no common material; for the fence consisted of the most precious substances, and the whole of it was entwined by flowers. Strolling to one of the fountains I there saw what appeared to be crest-fallen spirits; spirits who were evidently suffering under some great depression. Stepping up to them I enquired the reason, when I found that they were experiencing a feeling of isolation. This, I ascertained, was on account of their not being long in the sphere; the customs of which can only be mastered by those who have had sufficient experience to give them confidence. I also found here people who had suffered from those crimes which your world is so severe upon, those who have been outcasts, and thrown aside by their brothers and sisters, but whose sufferings have been entailed not through wilful acts of their own. I also found other classes of spirits, viz., infants who had not breathed the balmy air of earth. They also are brought here. We shall examine them one by one. (I shall here consider the former of these two groups). I asked them what position in life they had held. They seemed by the outward influence that surrounded them as if they did not belong to the sphere they were in. Ne'er shall I forget the story of one, which brought tears to

Digitized by Google

my eyes. I felt a sympathy for these unfriended spirits, who had been left upon earth without a hand to guide them ; and where cruel man had ensnared them in his toils to administer to his selfish pleasures. My feelings being drawn towards them from having learnt their piteous history, I became desirous of being of service to them, for I was inclined to show them a road that they could more clearly understand. While conducting them along the path by which I had recently advanced, they caught a glimpse of what I told you before, viz., the cross—upon which they fell down, but by an influence I cannot explain, they were immediately compelled to arise from the recumbent posture. "This, my sisters," I said, "is not the faith that will give you the natural rest and spiritual quietness which you are seeking. It is not in these emblems of the past, nor is it in these vast heights which you behold, nor even in these monuments and buildings that you will find comfort for your spirit. It must be alone by a cleansing and purifying process that comfort will be gained. I could show you the path to the higher intelligences, but you are not yet prepared to soar to those brighter realms." I felt a longing—an inward feeling—to try and help them on, but some mysterious influence prevented me. No sooner had this feeling passed from me than I was possessed by some power which seemed to lift me from the place where I was standing, and I beheld two forms which were grand to look at. They wafted over and through the frames of my forlorn companions streams of pure magnetic feeling, from which the latter appeared to gather strength. But the imploring glances, the upturned eyes of supplication, and the face quivering with an emotion past description, the form being so agitated that it could not elevate itself in such a presence, seemed to indicate the influence of the cross upon them. The harmony that surrounded them seemed to contrast so strongly with their own feelings that they almost threw themselves down in the

Digitized by Google

intensity of their grief for what they had done. "Arise," said a bright sister in a gentle tone, "Arise! Thou art not the dark false traitresses which man has pronounced thee. It is the surroundings in which thou hast mixed that have contaminated thee. I will show that you are not all you have been painted, and that in your souls are brighter spots than ever you thought of. I will tear away that corroding feeling which seems to shock you with its recollection. You are lost, my children, in this beautiful scenery; the place is not yet for you. They who brought you here did so in order that you might see, black as you are represented upon earth—painted in all the horrible colours in which man has enshrouded thee—that thou art not past cleansing. Here you were brought in order that you might see yourselves inwardly as well as outwardly, and also to show you that the happiness which you now perceive is enjoyed here will be shared in by you if you choose to follow the paths and precepts I will now mark out for you." Then, by a pass, the two bright forms I alluded to seemed to throw a darkness over them, and led them forth. I cried, "Sisters, take them not away! but take me, who degraded my being while upon earth; I, who stood in the halls of gladness while these were pining in the hells of darkness; I, who have been tied to the appetites, and have done those things that I ought to have left undone." They turned and said, "No, friend! you must look to yourself; the colour of the aura around you is not yet pure; when it is then you may try and bring forward such as these, but they must now be taken into another sphere." They then passed from my vision, and I felt a loneliness come over me.

As I was proceeding farther I saw six spirits who were walking arm in arm, and I heard biblical, or bible teachings, spoken of, and I immediately thought that I might be allowed the opportunity of drinking some of the waters of knowledge, as they seemed to be speaking of a subject I wished to be

Digitized by Google

enlightened upon. I was drawn immediately under their influence, which, however, did not seem to suit me. I heard them then speak of the bible. Among them I found there were some who had helped to arrange it and placed in it things which best suited their own individual purposes. I observed one who, with a merry, twinkling eye, appeared to forget that he had left behind so many false impressions created by that book. I looked upon him, and asked him how he could enjoy his future existence while so many were making their lives miserable, and their existence a dull cloud, through nothing else than the superstitious teaching he had left on earth. I was drawn nearer to him, but he seemed to move away in an attempt to avoid me. I said to him, "I pray you talk with me. I have thirsted long to know something of this ancient religion, whether it is true as portrayed in the bible?" "Ah! friend," he said, "I will tell you something concerning the bible, but before doing so I will lead you to another place. I will take you to what is termed the ancient synagogue. It is, by earthly measurement of distance, very many miles away, but it will amply repay you for your journey." We then came to an understanding that I should meet him after the lapse of a certain period of time, which here we do not compute in the same way as you do on earth.

Let us now consider the other group to which I made reference. After parting with the one, whom I described as having a merry, twinkling eye, I passed on, and came to what seemed a house, to and from which there was a constant traffic of spirits, bearing substances which, although only partially concealed by a transparent covering, I was unable to ascertain the nature of. An influence that kept me from approaching closely apparently surrounded each. As I was thinking and studying, whilst leaning against one of the finest monuments in statuary you could possibly behold, there approached me a female form, whose locks were silver, and whose form, though

Digitized by Google

beautiful, bore what appeared traces of age upon it. I noticed that the garments she wore seemed to be woven in one piece. I timidly addressed her in these words, "Friend-lady! Be thou queen, or fairy, or angel, I wish to know what is behind that outward show. What is this building, how long has it stood, and how long did it take to build. Its height seems greater than any edifice I have yet beheld. Tell me, I pray thee, what is its meaning." "This," she replied," "is the place built of old by the spirits who once dwelt here. It is to this place, friend, where those innocent beings are brought, who pass away prematurely, whether through natural or through selfish causes, from the planet on which you once lived, before they breathed its balmy air of life. Nought is wasted; these innocents are brought here." A quiver swept o'er me in a moment. With all the insight into natural laws which I had enjoyed upon earth, there was one thing I had failed to perceive—yes, in my searching for the "Philosopher's stone" there was one thing I had always placed out of my earthly and spiritual mind, viz., the possibility of finding out the truth of this in the hereafter. I launched forth. "Oh! Deity—Mysterious Being! Nought is lost in Thy all-powerful hands. Through Thine infinite wisdom, all the purports of man's spiritual existence are accomplished. Born upon earth, he is sooner or later transferred away to other worlds. But why is he lost to earthly glow? Let me learn how it can be that Nature never loses, but always gains." A smile came o'er my bright companion's countenance, and then she said: "Night succeeds unto day—day follows night; nought is lost. Dear brother, everything here, and everything below, enjoys an existence; but wait, for I have not yet satisfied you. See the planets that once you did behold upon earth; wait until you reach another sphere, and there you will become in harmony with many beings whose superior refinements you little dream of at present; and you will also meet beings from

Digitized by Google

other planets more bright and glorious than the one on which you lived, and from others which have not reached so high a stage of progression." I then wished to watch the process of all this transference of substance, but my bright companion soon stopped my curiosity, and told me that another time I should be gifted with the penetration I desired. Suddenly perceiving that there were many spirits coming, I retired. I thought that modesty, like the flowers that close at sunset with you, dwelt in that house or quiet enclosure to and from which there was such constant traffic. Oh! man, think of this, and respect one another—cultivate the beautiful gift of modesty.

I was promised that, when I returned and tarried a little at this place, I should be shown many wondrous things. I left, determined to return again and try to penetrate the cause of the influence that had come over me so quickly. Passing along, I took an outward circle; I felt that some spirits were drawing near, and I was led to the exact place where I beheld the six previously mentioned walking arm-in arm. The bible contributor left them and joined me. We passed through the entrance of an enclosure, and upon the hill beyond I saw a synagogue, for such we will term it. Its description I will now give you. I could see at a glance that old-fashioned architects had brought it to the perfection it had attained. It was built upon the summit of a high hill of marble, up which, leading to the synagogue, steps had been cut, which terminated at a landing or platform. As we were ascending step by step, passes were made, and we were immediately lifted up on to the platform. There I stood and saw the old bards, who looked old indeed with their grizzly beards and long-drawn features, and who seemed to guard with all the vigour of youth this sacred tabernacle, within whose bounds I determined to place myself and see the secrets it contained. "But stop," they cried, for inside I was not to go before my

Digitized by Google

spiritual senses were wafted to sleep. A sleepy sensation at once came o'er me, and when I became restored time seemed not to have passed. I found myself inside an ancient porch that was looked upon with religious fervour, and at the same time I heard a voice say to me: "We will show you the sacred books that are within." I was told that it was only lately such forms as ours could pass within these walls, as the entrance was a secret until some unknown power disclosed the pass-word that was used. "Tell me," I said, "are the bible teachings which I was made to receive true or false? If true I will hasten to earth and bear the tidings, or, if false, I will endeavour to remove the error." Soon there was shown me a mysterious-looking book, formed of plates which resembled steel. Whoever touched this book was enabled to read and comprehend its contents, among which were accounts of visions of many who had professed to teach the holy Scriptures. I noticed that Moses, Abraham, Isaac, and many more of those familiar names were written therein, with descriptions of what they did and taught, also of their offences; the latter were evidently related for the purpose of giving the semblance of truth to the former, as if no other proof were wanted. I looked again and there beheld pictures and other representations of the old Jewish mythology; and even portraits of the mythological teachers, who, in all their sublime ignorance had entered and adorned this temple. On seeing these I inwardly exclaimed—"Surely, earth is not the only place where superstition reigns!" At last one spoke, and thus he said—"Friend! this place which you entered blind was once reverenced as a tabernacle. It was here that many of our forefathers lost years, centuries of earthly time in worshipping a cloud instead of Deity. However, as you look around you, this place is a warning. Adorned in grandeur, as it appears to you (for the place seemed to sparkle in scenes of brilliancy) they continued in it their superstitious worship the

Digitized by Google

same as they did when upon earth, and thousands could here be seen worshipping priestly myths instead of Deity. But now this has changed, and light has dawned upon it, as it will upon the earth, but not before man's conscience and intellect are released." Here I saw a picture which appeared to have been painted and lost colour. "Yes," a voice replied, in answer to my remark as to its faded appearance, "so did that which it depicted lose colour. He that painted that imagined the horrors of hell, and millions have believed his repulsive imagination as divine truth. There was a time, my friend, when your feet would never have been allowed within this sacred chamber, but, come, I will show you over it, for the place is left here to teach those who still believe in this mysterious and debasing teaching." "But wait," I said, "let me examine this picture, for it doth to me a tale unfold." I saw, indeed, that the artist who painted it was of no mean ability. "Canst tell me who it was painted this? All the horrors that hell wears the sufferers appear to retain in their spirit forms; so that, whatever hand painted these scenes, held the power of catching the idea of spirits on the flames." "It seems," he replied, "a pitiful sight; but what would the reality be? Methinks I would not like to see it. I have seen many wretched forms in the sphere below; but I rather think if what that terrible picture depicts of hell were true, it would, indeed be horrible. But, friend, I have ceased to believe in such a myth." "Pass on," I returned, "for I am anxious to see you draw the curtain aside." I then beheld the Ark of the Covenant. "Ha! Doth this form of superstition reign here?" No, it is merely to be looked at, friend; it is not because we believe in it. Here it is, and it will show you that the monuments of the past have not been wiped away here, but are retained in order to show to all who like to look thereon, what absurd, misleading, and superstitious teachings many have received as divine verities when upon earth." An oppressiveness then came over me and

Digitized by Google

I felt the same inconvenience I had been subject to before. Previous to leaving I could not help thinking of the many feet which had trod upon these marble slabs. I could not help thinking of the rare ignorance that had accompanied the forms of their superstition to the spirit-life. I could not help paying a sort of homage to those who in earnestness had trod these halls, decked as they are, in all their ignorant grandeur. How deep-seated must the teachings of the ancients have been, — how deeply engraven upon their minds—when they carried them to such an extent as here exhibited!

I then passed on to a triangular cellar, from which I descended some stairs, when I was subjected to another influence, and was brought to the margin of a beautiful lake; over the waters of which music seemed to ripple, and thousands of voices accompanied. I felt a shortness of breath or gasping sensation, and when I had gone a short distance one cried "Stop! and we will show you what was not visible from yonder spot." Around the margin of this lake I noticed that there were beings of a different class to any I had hitherto seen. Their hair hung in beautiful wildness down to their waists; their hands did not seem so symmetrically-shaped as ours, and their forms were smaller. In stature they appeared like children; yet, I was told, they were matured by age. I could hear them singing to the tune of the music on the water. "Friend, I said, "what manner of spirits are these. Are they from the planet I came from?" "No; they are spirits in a state of advancement as you are; but they cannot mingle with you, nor you with them. Those that you see here are of the most sympathetic nature; the slightest thing affects them. Their thoughts, however, are not so susceptible as yours; yet so sensitive are they to the laws which govern their being that they feel a shock which would have no effect upon your spiritual body." "Can

Digitized by Google

I not get closer to view them?" I said. "No, you must now view them from a distance. When you reach a higher sphere, and become acquainted with more developed spirits of brighter worlds, they will lead you to this spot again, and then you will be able to interview them. Wait, and I will try and give you another glimpse of the lake from a different point of view." Here we passed farther round and close to the lake, whose waters I wished to approach and tread in, and, although I attempted it once or twice, there was an influence which baffled me. As I stood viewing this scene I beheld another spirit nigh me, and said: "Let me homage pay thee. Where comest thou from—from what earth or planet? Or hast thou ever been bound with a coarser material? Thine eyes are brighter and far more glittering than all the gems that I have ever seen upon earth or in the spheres. Tell me, or wilt thou bear me away to the lands thou comest from?" She said, "Friend! I come from what they term 'the fifth sphere,' a spirit not of your planet, but from one which you can see from your earth. Why I seem so much finer is because our spirits live in accordance with the laws of Nature, and therefore more closely under the guidance of Deity than do those on the planet from which you come. Lift up your head, and remember that we all are of mortal origin." I exclaimed, "I am made happy, indeed, at the thought that we are thus related." She could penetrate me, and see the power which linked me to my wife. Her form seemed like the purest of crystal, glittering brighter than a shooting star; and when she moved she shed forth colours of the brightest hues. "Many mansions," she said, "many halls, many scenes have you viewed which are great and wonderful to behold, but wait till I lead you to where I will give you a glimpse of that which surpasses all you have yet seen." Forward we went. I was drawn gently along the margin of the lake, and there appeared in the distance that which reminded me of a bridge standing

Digitized by Google

upon pillars. This, with the sight beyond, enkindled my enthusiasm to such a pitch that I seemed to shout within my very soul, "Jerusalem! I have found thee at last!" She stopped me: "Friend! this is the entrance to a higher sphere! But wait; farther you cannot now penetrate." I will not attempt to describe the scene which then aroused all the warmth of my imagination, for in such an attempt I should fail, but will merely say that I saw what seemed to be another world linked by the bridge, whose expansion appeared immeasurably great, and whose supports were of such an altitude that, as I looked from base to summit, they seemed to reach from lake to sky. I saw many spirits, as they passed in the distance, whose colour seemed as bright as hers who had led me to this enchanting scene and there left me to meditate thereon. I thought, could I but reach that shore; could I only upon that bridge once stand, I should be rewarded by the sight of what is enacted in another world beyond! But there was a chasm I could not pass. Much disappointed, and with feelings akin to despair, I turned my back upon a scene so unutterably beautiful, and inwardly exclaimed, "Oh! could she whose wondrous beauty I have seen—whose form is love—and who in sympathy pitied the ignorant state I am in—cannot she come and speak to me again and bring me to that scene of beauty?" By an unseen influence I was drawn back, and then a spirit coming forward, said: "Back to your level! You have risen too high! Here is no place for you! You must wait until you are more developed and the gates are opened, and then you can pass, but not before." I then thought what need have I to try and reach that spot? Is not the sphere I live in all I want? I have my wife—and there I stopped, for I knew that before I reached the "Fifth Sphere," I could not be united by the spiritual tie to her, who was so much purer in mind than myself. (This, doubtless, seems strange, wondrous strange, to you. But

Digitized by Google

earthly marriages are void here unless the pair they join together are connected by the ties of affinity; then are they indeed two souls united for ever.) I will return to my sphere —'tis no use tarrying; back I will go. The world I have had a glimpse of suits not my present state of development; the one which I desired to leave does. The presence of my wife here seems to humble me, despite the teaching and discipline to which I have subjected myself. Step by step have I advanced; yet my curiosity and impatience have gone before, thus bringing disappointment in their train. I was too eager to reach the higher spheres before I had mastered a knowledge of the one I was in, and which suited the stage of development I had attained. . . . . .

I have exhausted my power, and will conclude by expressing the sentiments of a child, who never knew this planet, except what it has seen of it since it has been brought back. I will try to convey her meaning, thus: "I was told they put me in a box, and then that I was gone, never to see them more. But how great was their mistake! My form was but a very little one; but little as it was my spirit friends seemed to be interested in it. They took me by the hand, and led me up till I came to mansions; then to the home they spoke about. When I awoke in spirit-life, their kindness moved me, and stirred affections in my heart. They seemed to know that I had awakened from another life, and they led me gently by the hand to the place where now I stand, and they showed me many things I had never seen before. Everything was hard to understand, because experience had not given me its gifts. When I heard them speak of education's noble advantages, it made me stop, and feel truly as a little child that did not know its alphabet." Good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE X.

DELIVERED 8TH JANUARY, 1875.

GOOD EVENING. In my last lecture I broke away from the subject upon which I intended to have spoken. Sometimes, when speaking through this channel, my perceptions become so animated that I cannot possibly control the feeling which I pass into the medium, and, in consequence, I too frequently break away into scenes which I should not then enter upon. It has been the fault of my controlling ever since I have influenced the medium, and I suppose—like many other faults—will remain the same. The scenes, though so deeply interesting to me, are so numerous that I cannot dwell so long on some portions as I should like, as, for instance, in my last lecture. The reason I mention this is, because from these causes many passages are very disconnected; and, perhaps, this may convey to some of you the impression that my statements are given at random, or on the spur of the moment. But I must ask you to make allowance for the difficulties I have to encounter in thus communicating, an allowance which—were you conversant with only a portion of those difficulties—I am certain you would readily concede.

It was my intention to confine the subject of my last lecture to a description of the different classes or grades of spirits with whom I came in contact; but, when I revert to scenes of which I am so fond, my feelings overpower me, and I unconsciously digress from the subject to which I should rigidly adhere. At the same time, these scenes are so splendid, so ravishingly beautiful, that when I attempt to describe them to you I feel that it is impossible to do justice to them. Like

Digitized by Google

a painter, with brush in hand and a beautiful landscape before him, he feels—however skilful his touch—that he cannot reproduce the living reality which stands before him. I was always fond of Nature,—of woods, valleys, hills, running streams,—and still this partiality clings to me.

I shall now bring your minds to where I left off, and take you step by step to the different localities I visited in this sphere, whose various classes of spirits I felt a great interest in, and had therefore a curiosity to see, which feelings I was enabled to gratify through the help given me by the higher ministering spirits. But, like a child in a strange school, I had first to learn its ways, and, at starting, I was under the disadvantage of being as great a stranger as when entering the second sphere. I found the paths running much in the same way as those upon earth ; and I often experienced a difficulty in tracing them to the different places I wished to reach. Just as, when one is transferred from the earth to the second sphere he is not at once initiated into the knowledge of the laws and forms ruling there, but has to learn them step by step, by application. And thus, once more, with the assistance of those who volunteered to aid me, I started to learn the ways and intricacies of the third sphere.

I will now call your attention to what you term the cardinal points of the compass, viz., North, South, East and West, so that I can direct your attention more particularly to the places.

I was taken towards the east by an old and learned spirit who had resided some time in this sphere. (Previous to my departure my wife was left in one of the bands or groups of spirits with whom she was in affinity, so that her mind would be at perfect ease and rest). We started, and travelled over beautiful sand hills, which were irrigated by sparkling waters, that flowed close to our feet. I inquired in what direction we were going, and where would our journey end? My

Digitized by Google

companion looked at me with his love-lit eyes, and thus spoke: "A beginning you have just made; why think of ending? There are no such things as beginning and ending in God's domains." We travelled on, and drew near to what seemed a large plain, which was inhabited by a class of spirits different to any I had seen before. We were met by many of them, and brought into one of the most unpretentious towns you could behold. There seemed to be no grand or great buildings, but all the houses and cottages exhibited outwardly the rarest simplicity, a character which, on an acquaintance with them, I ascertained to be in accord with the tastes of the occupants, of whom there were many thousands, all being people who had passed from earth, where they had manifested a spirit of self-denial, and where some of them had endured the greatest inconveniences that man could possibly suffer. They had been honourable, just, and noble men, but were poor both in education and the world's goods, though they were rich in that they had done what was right when upon earth. For their reward they had gained this place, and here was their rest. They have continued to adhere to the simple, artless wants of their natures here. They are banded together, but, notwithstanding many creeds are represented, there is not that closeness of character among them which distinguishes some communities of spirits that I have had occasion to speak of. I found, on conversing with them, that simplicity was the distinguishing mark of their natures. They knew little or nothing of what had occurred upon earth since their day, and many retained the peculiarities of their native spots, such as the different country parts of England, or other places, are noted for. Your old friend Hurst,* for instance,

* The first spirit who controlled Harris (the medium through whom these lectures were given). Hurst was a native of Somersetshire, whose quaint, peculiar idiom he still adheres to when communicating through Harris.

Digitized by Google

affectionately clings to his old, native, broad language. It is much the same here as upon earth, where he that is ignorant will look upon the more cultured mind with respect. I travelled among them for weeks of your time, and found that they had very little ambition and no real erudition. I thought as I looked upon them, where are the dogmas of religion now! Souls that were once chained and fettered fast, have at last felt the influence of the blessed, and have awakened to understand their simple natures. I ascertained that on those innocent minds, when in earth life, priests had long preyed, binding them with fetters that held them strong, till at last death interfered and broke the chain; and their natures being good and simple, they rose to this third sphere, where they have continued. Simplicity was the great security of their natures. On earth, through erroneous teaching, their clouded and uncultured intellects had crowned the Deity with a crown of thorns; but as soon as they woke up in this sphere they found out, and immediately recognised their error.

At length we left this place, and travelled farther—not in the same direction; for we glanced off more to the north-east, and through, what you would term, beautiful, wild scenery. Here I found the trees even more stately than those which I had seen in the other sphere. Some of them seemed to attain a height of 500 feet! And each tree seemed united to its fellow by those magnetic ties which can be perceived only by the spiritual vision. The leaves of every tree were of a peculiar shape or form; some resembled a crown; others a diamond; and again there were those which were shaped like a star, and more in the form of some beautiful flower. I may also notice that here the trees are variegated in colour, the foliage on one side being of a beautiful red, and on the other a beautiful green. I observed with astonishment that the flowers looked rather cropped in this particular part; they did not raise their heads in a similar manner to those I had

Digitized by Google

heretofore seen. I took one in my hand, and I will try to describe to you one of its characteristics. As I held it in my hand and turned it, there were emitted from it the brightest colours that I could describe. How came it with such a power? Each time I turned it, the diversified colours of the rainbow emanated from it! The thought occurred to me that Nature intended these varied colours for symbols. I questioned my guide to that effect. "Yes, each colour is the symbol of purity and love. When you tread the steps of the higher spheres you will find the colours blending even more harmoniously. The flower in your hand possesses a deathless bloom; it can never fade. In that respect it is dissimilar to the flowers of earth. If you carry that flower with you to the upper spheres, the bright and happy spirits there can tell you from what sphere you come. You will meet with a great variety of flowers and plants by-and-bye." The more I thought the greater was my perplexity. This flower—what a marvel to me! No matter how often, how quickly I changed its position, it as frequently and rapidly revealed those dazzling colours.

On we went, over high-topped mountains, wild and romantic, and round lakes beautiful to behold. On the summits of the mountains I noticed that many of the trees growing there were bent down with fruit. Here was another examination necessary. "Stop," said my guide. "Examine this fruit. The spirit-form in this sphere being light, airy and beautiful, requires not the coarse material diet. You had it, however, in the second sphere, where you enjoyed not such fruit as this." I touched one, and directly I did, so delicate was the structure that held it, so tender the stalk by which it was suspended, that it broke in my hand, when I discovered that it resembled in shape a fruit you term a pear. As a child would have done, I immediately made an attempt to eat it, but was restrained by my companion, who took it from me

Digitized by Google

and said, "Spirit-brother, tarry! You almost require the care and attention of a mother. The fruit that grows before your vision you do not understand." He returned it to me after having shown the proper way to divest it of its spherical clothing. I touched it with my lips, when I felt a thrilling sensation sweep o'er me, which imparted a vigour to the whole of my frame.

Onward we proceeded, and as we were ascending a mountain I heard singing of the wildest strains. It did not resemble the delightful music I had heard before, and, although in perfect harmony, yet was wild and captivating. This singing continued to delight our sense of hearing until we arrived before a large lake, the banks of which were occupied by houses of great grandeur, many of which were detached or separated from others, while there were those that were in a half-finished state. The peculiar feature of these mansions consisted in the magnitude of their verandahs, which were carried out from, or projected beyond, the main building, a distance by your measurement of 50 or 60 yards! Each building, with its enormous verandah, was entirely enveloped in a bower of flowers. Wherever I turned my eyes the same sight met their gaze. Again I heard the wild strains of music floating on the breeze, and then I saw spirit-forms of children decked in flowers, enjoying themselves at play. Now, we being of more advanced and cultured minds, their amusements did not take much hold upon us.

We stayed for some time in this neighbourhood, visiting and inspecting many of the dwellings. The climate was of such a temperature that no great amount of clothing was necessary, the air being exquisitely balmy, soft, and sweet. We ascended higher and still felt the influence of those fragrant flowers, so strong indeed, was the perfume that it seemed almost sensible to the taste! When we ascended still higher, we could, as it appeared to me, look down upon the atmosphere surrounding the

Digitized by Google

community we had left behind us, who, we were enabled to perceive, were bound together by the strongest ties of affection. On reaching the top of the mountain we could still hear the pellucid waters of the lake rippling and breaking on the beach. The scene beneath us in the distance was enchanting, and looked like a valley surrounded by tall hills, whose beautifully pure and white tops appeared to emulate each other in attempts to reach the canopy of sky above them. "By what means, or by what power," I asked my spirit brother, "were these mountains reared that surround this happy people?" "Nature's laws," he said, "are perfect. These people are bound in love to this place. They have no ambition as long as they thus enjoy their spiritual existence; that valley, surrounded as it is, by these hills is their heaven, and they rest satisfied with their lot. But by-and-bye the light of progress will shine in, and then they will wake to find that there are higher states to seek. Thousand of spirits have passed from the midst of the throng; but still they daily and hourly increase." We travelled over several of the mountains that environed this valley, but neither the track we traversed nor the roads branching from it, appeared to be much used. On the face of some rocks which we passed, I saw the names of many of earth's reformers engraved, and among them was the venerable name of Martin Luther. These words, my spirit friend uttered: "Behold! You see this place where first many of those noble persons, who have passed on, after having exposed some of the follies of the forms of religion prevailing on earth in their day, and thus for others have made the way discernible, which, ere their advent, was not so easy. But they have left their names here inscribed, which, with the associations they convey, will remind passers-by of the work performed by those reformers." Not tarrying here long, we proceeded onward and drew near to a city, whose spires towered high, and whose aspect indicated a city of great

Digitized by Google

antiquity. It was not surrounded by hills, but was situated on a steadily declining plain; and I noticed that, far out to the west there seemed to be nothing but water, which element in this sphere is much finer than that of the second sphere. It resembles somewhat the appearance presented by the atmosphere on a clear day devoid of wind, when the sun's rays beam down with intense fervour; the atmosphere on such a day has a quivering or vibratory motion, together with a light hazy appearance, an appearance reminding me of the corresponding likeness presented by this water, as viewed from a distance. Many spirits are taken aback when they first come in sight of these waters, so no wonder they had a similar effect upon a stranger like myself.

The towers of this city were built by ancient architects, such as, I dare say, you have often heard of or read about. Some of the Pyramids of Egypt seem to be of a remote age; but there have been those—now sunk out of sight beneath the ocean—of a far more remote antiquity. Those that remain serve to show, as it were, the style of man's doings in those days. We came in sight of two large monuments or pyramids, as you would term them, surmounted by lights which seemed to flash over and light up the dark land near the town as we were approaching. When we came to the doors or portals, and found that we were not then allowed admission, we determined on awaiting the time when admission would be granted. I said to my friend, anxious to know who built this city, "Canst thou inform me by whose agency its foundations were laid?" "I will lead you back thousands of years," he replied. "When spirits first reached this sphere from the earth, many, who were of a scholastic turn of mind, and fond of study, sought to place themselves away from the intercourse of their fellow-spirits, and they chose the site of this ancient city for their place of refuge, and then the foundations of the structures which you see were laid. Among many others, in later times,

Digitized by Google

who resorted to this city was the reformer, Martin Luther. And now you behold the size and dimensions to which it has attained. I cannot picture to you the glorious scenes within; but you must wait, for we of spirit-nature cannot force ourselves upon those who do not choose to admit us to their society. You cannot, perhaps, reverence many of their teachings; but, let me tell you, noble spirits do there exist whose forms of worship you might, in your comparatively dark and ignorant nature, scoff at or ridicule. But there is goodness there which you will have to wait long ere you can equal. See the paths, the marks, the footsteps here before you of those who did not part with their religious faith. Dost thou see these towers or pyramids that all around are built? Ancient spirits erected these in all good faith; but they were mistaken in their ideas when they passed away in death, for they did not, as they expected, come in actual contact with Deity. Many of those inside could unfold tales to you, and if we had the time I would relate some to you. These aspiring towers were built by those who thought that, by a miracle, a great flood was about to engulf them."

I then heard the tones of a large bell ringing, which were succeeded by a clatter or noise coming from within the gates, and a refrain arose from three or four hundred trembling spirits outside, wishing to gain admission. We stepped inside first, and after having been asked what we wished, we told them that we were desirous of seeing the different classes of spirits they had there, and of judging of the various modes of teaching among them. Then, after receiving a ticket or pass, we were allowed to proceed. Each court-yard we passed was paved with the most curious-shaped tiles you could think of. The noise made by the passage of feet over these tiles, and a peculiar building and its surroundings, re-called vividly to my mind a visit I once paid to an ancient castle in England, whose ruins are now considered a great curiosity there. The

Digitized by Google

building to which I refer bore such a close resemblance to that ancient castle that I was inclined to believe it must have been its ghost! It illustrated the style of architecture in which the ancients indulged—a style quite different from any I had hitherto seen in the spheres, for I noticed stories with parapets around each. Beyond the boundaries of this city there were buildings extending farther than my vision could perceive. I was told that I could not inspect these until we passed out. The gates were opened for us, and I beheld a city larger than any in your world. Ne'er shall I forget the scene—streets, markets, temples, and all such things as you could possibly imagine were there to be seen; life appeared quite as natural as with yourselves. I found there various sects, such as Pagans, Mahommedans, Jews; the latter in their particular tribes mustered strongly, and recognised no difference, made no distinction, among those of various complexions by whom they were surrounded. Each spirit there held out the hand irrespective of colour or religion; into that association admission to all was granted freely so long as they conformed to the laws laid down. Each sect had its own particular church appropriated for worship. I found that Sunday was patronised or kept up, but on a different scale to that which the civilised world now observes. From early morning to the meridian of that day, or its equivalent, was there devoted to the different forms of worship, and the remainder was dedicated to the multiform methods of recreation there indulged in; so that they enjoyed both kinds of entertainment. Of all their tastes and inclinations I perceived that the preference was given to building. I was taken to where the first stone of one of the churches before mentioned was laid, and there I beheld a figure, which stood out grandly, cut in the whitest marble, upon which was carved the name of Martin Luther. I looked with amazement on this, and said, "Friend, when Luther first to this sphere did rise, did he originate this

Digitized by Google

association? And did he this monument erect?" "Listen," was the answer, "this stone or monument which you now look upon was left here by Luther for his friends—to enable them to trace him out. Each year of time that speeds by, some of the numbers here pass on, and they are replaced by others; thus, you see, each band, or set of members, in course of time passes away, though this may appear, to your understanding, not to be in harmony with your ideas. The law of love and truth, however, cannot be ignored, and spirits cannot long lag or stop behind when the appointed time comes for them to depart for other spheres.

I shall repeat to-night the prayer as uttered by a Hindoo :— "Various worlds have I passed through, oceans of time have I traversed o'er, and in all have I seen Thy works, Oh Wondrous Deity! By all have I been taught to admire Thee, Thou Ineffable Creator! Rays of brightness seem to glitter in the Hindoo's soul, dreams of love and grandeur burst upon his inmost being, and the thought of Deity is his life. Oh, Deity! the Soul of the Hindoo's life, the Soul of all nations. Each nation, though it fought in strife with its blood, yet Thou redeemed it from its sins, and dost assist its people to adorn their spirit-forms in love and beauty. When upon earth I worshipped rivers and other idols, because my mind had not then expanded; the soul that seemed hidden deep within me had not then burst its barriers and opened my eyes to the glittering state of flaming orbs, which have since transformed me into a different being. Oh, Deity! oft and again, when from sleep I awoke, I took many different roads, and as I passed along them there I saw Deity in all. In the raging mountain torrent, from the hills of earth afar off, and from many realms, I heard that Deity was there; and there I again hastened. Also from other places I heard the same cry, 'Deity is there; He has not gone.' The rumbling of the thunder speaks to one's soul in

Digitized by Google

tones of grandeur, and quickens the feeling that tells of Deity, 'Deity is there; He has not gone.' Then laugh while the flowers are blooming, and Nature in a million ways peals forth her lovely melody. Let young and old join in one great shout, 'Deity is here; He has not gone!" Good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XI.

DELIVERED 12TH JANUARY, 1875.

GOOD EVENING. At the conclusion of my last discourse I left off at a city where there were spirits of various sorts and of different nations. The buildings were of very fine architecture, the principal part being of the Gothic style, and much finer than anything on your earth. I observed that many of the streets were paved with beautiful Oriental material, such as was generally used in synagogues. In the portion of this city which had been founded by Luther I was surprised to find such a mixture of various sorts and inclinations bound together in one—for they seemed to be of no particular sect or creed.

Being taken, or, rather led, to a place that was occupied by a large square, in the centre of the town, I was shown where many old martyrs had staid, and still often came to visit. It was here that spiritual manifestations, as now exemplified upon many portions of the earth, had reached the first stage of mediumship. Spirits who leave their bodies without the faintest powers of mediumship having been perceptible to themselves, or their earthly friends, are developed in the spheres, until, gradually, the light is brought to bear upon them; but it must be sought after, and, when found, cultivated. I have met no one who so truly made it his work to search out, and acquire a knowledge of spiritual chemistry, as a spirit known as "King." I may term him the founder of what is called "Materialisation," and it is in this city where that science has reached the perfection it now assumes. It was here that many parts of the atmosphere were first divided into

Digitized by Google

sections, as it were, by spiritual clairvoyants; so that, as the saying is, "One could rise from the dead, and speak." I also found that various parts of the city were adorned by the statues of many who had passed through; those who had been eminent, in their earth-life, for some of the cardinal virtues. Monuments, lecture-halls, and other prominent structures were in abundance. I saw that the places of worship were not used merely by one sect or creed, but that those of the Jews, and those of a philosophical creed, intermingled throughout all of them. Each one seemed to work for the others' good, though there were many who appeared to be still under some darkening influences; yet, so great was the brotherly love that was held out to them, that they apparently passed a life of happiness and contentment. I subsequently ascertained that, as free and liberal as these spirits were, there were among them certain classes who, to a great extent, kept aloof, and did not yield implicit submission to the form of government ruling, which consisted of a code of rules selected by those of most prolonged residence there, and who possessed the greatest ability to devise measures for the benefit of the masses in that particular city. I noticed that there were means at command for bringing the refractory spirits to punishment, and when once the authorities had succeeded in bringing them within the charmed circle, they could not do otherwise than eventually admire the beautiful form of government; which was efficient, because no one was ever placed in a position he was unfit to occupy and adorn; none were called on to undertake works they did not understand; no one was made the slave of another, but each seemed to strive to benefit the whole community.

I was anxious to see those who ruled, and I was taken to a structure of great height and solidity, and of such an appearance that I almost thought I stood once more before the House of Commons in London, as it existed in my time, only

Digitized by Google

on a larger and finer scale. As we approached we heard a voice uttering these few, simple words, "Come ye, who are heavily laden with spiritual sins, and spiritual troubles: come ye that have suffered from the flesh: join us in love, and we will light the path for you henceforth." Looking eastward I saw a high wall; to ascertain something about which I felt a natural curiosity, and I was told that if I would wait patiently I would be taken to the other side of this dividing wall. We headed towards the east, and on our passage thence I observed that the country on this side of the town was thinly inhabited by spirits of a selfish disposition, who reminded me much of a section of the Jewish race upon earth. We soon came to another large city, which was completely bound in by a strong line of beautiful trees I thought that I should here behold greater forms of love—that I should see scenes of truer and higher work than any I had seen before. How vastly can even the spirit's imagination be deceived by outward looks! How deep can be the feelings of disappointment at the discovery of a faulty opinion! Mystified upon earth, one imagines all will be cleared up and rendered simple in the spheres. But how great the disappointment! Though at times he feels the surrounding influences of beauty and goodness, yet there are periods when he comes upon scenes in which he sees the darkness again. Those who have built their hopes upon unalloyed bliss in these spheres will be sadly disappointed in their expectations; and those who imagine that here everything is loving and lovely will likewise find their mistake. I found that I was among a strong band of the ancient Jews. The prophecy of being again brought into one nation they imagined was being verified in themselves in this locality, and those of adverse creeds who had associated with them in the rudimentary sphere, seemed to have cut their acquaintance. It was in this locality they expected to partake of the milk and honey promised them. Here they

Digitized by Google

were just as vicious, just as griping, just as quick to gain any point upon other spirits, as they were upon earth to gain money from their contemporaries. Not even would they allow us for some time to enter in among them. It was only by the exercise of patience and a great deal of trouble that we succeeded in effecting an entrance. We were not willingly taken by the hand, but they took care of us as if against their wills; and when we came closely into their midst the mist which had been hanging over the spot seemed to break away, and exposed to view what appeared to be a beautiful land. But there was something wanting. Fountains were there pouring out their limpid streams; but they failed to render forth the sweet music I had heard from other fountain streams. The sound seemed to jar like an unstrung instrument, in whose notes there is no harmony. The flowers appeared as if they were forced to bloom. The trees seemed to blossom and emit their perfume as if these operations were odious to them. Upon the countenance of several spirits there was a look which had a most repelling influence. What was the cause?—AVARICE; (avarice—the ruination of civilisation—the cause of the downfall of many governments, of the slaughter of thousands and thousands of victims). See their eyes flash! See their whole spiritual form quivering with the emotion of covetousness when something is spoken of that is to be obtained! Bear in mind I speak not of the nation at large, but merely of those whom I met in this group. That such perfect affinity and love should reign in the other grade of this sphere, while the same state of things did not exist in this one, is a seeming paradox that you will scarcely understand. Although the majority have broken away from the bonds of avarice which bind this community, on the other hand there are still some who would strip and take the bed from the widow!—who would tear away the bread from the orphan! . . . . . So, with all the beautiful scenes

Digitized by Google

surrounding the latter, there was a want—a dark shadow still hung over them. I must now break the power for a little time, and relieve the medium. We will resume in a quarter of an hour.

[The medium was here released for the time specified, when a resumption of the lecture took place.

The synagogues of this Jewish city—for Jewish it is in every respect—are structures bearing a great similarity to those of earth, at least to those which were there some few centuries back. But the Jews—these spirit Jews—worship in their synagogues not exactly according to the Mosaic code, but with a certain meagre spiritual light. Still, the various impolitic exactions in their laws will not admit of the True Light beaming upon them. They resemble many upon this earth, who see little beyond the spot upon which they stand. They are so exclusive as to refuse consociation with those who would gladly reveal to them bright glimmerings of the Light of Truth. They will not allow, except on rare occasions, strange or higher influences to come among them. They think that theirs is the "Promised Land of Canaan," and out of this idea they will not travel, but prefer to remain there, and continue their spiritually stagnant existence. They are contented with their lot, and still add to their habitations on the ground which they occupy. The city is built much in the old Jewish style of architecture; monuments and worshipping halls are constructed in the old fashion, with tall windows and long subterranean passages, which undermine the whole extent of the buildings. The structure of the greatest magnitude was embellished by eight towers, each of which was connected by a bridge built of white stone. The towers were square, and each one was of a different colour. They presented an appearance very much akin to the old fortified castles of the country in which some of you, perhaps, once lived, and, possibly, you have had the pleasure

Digitized by Google

of strolling over some of them. Here they seemed to have reached perfection, in shape, form, and ornament. They decorated these buildings, and made the interior to resemble the ancient castles frequented by warriors who had performed valorous deeds—deeds of which they were proud, and, to perpetuate the memory of which, the walls were decorated with trophies and armorial trappings. Here the old Hebrew bible was kept with great reverence. Here, also, were the monuments of those who had gone out from among them, some of which were covered in black drapery, or what appeared such. I said to a spirit, "Why coverest thou these up so? What is the motive for concealing these memorials, for such I take them to be?" "Ah," said he, "these are mementos of those who have gone, and have not proved true. They say they have gone to higher spheres. Surely they might have remained content with a residence here. However, their discontent and apostacy are recorded by these memorials being thus draped and hidden from our children's sight." Quoth I, "Would it not be better to take away the remnant, and pass it out of sight?" "Nay, my friend, if we take it out of sight it will not remain as a monument of warning to others; therefore we let it stand thus shrouded." Dark, superstitious ignorance, thought I, to which you cling like your forefathers, who were taught that they should be gathered together from north, south, east, and west, to occupy "a land flowing with milk and honey." And this ye believe to be the spot so designated, and the prophecy to be in course of fulfilment. The veil which you cherish around your spiritual existence seems almost as dark as that which hung around you upon earth, and which cows you down, preventing the dawn of that light which, otherwise, would break in upon your darkened understanding.

It was in the former city I have described to you where I first gained a knowledge of the system of communicating with

Digitized by Google

earth's inhabitants—the system termed by you "Mediumistic;" and where I first gained the power——[Pause]. I must say good night, for I cannot further control the medium this evening.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XII.

DELIVERED 15TH JANUARY, 1875.

GOOD EVENING! In my last lecture I had to break away from controlling the medium, because of the disturbed state of the elements, which prevented me doing justice to the subject I had in hand. This evening I hope to be enabled to do so, and to partially rectify the evil that happened.

At the termination of my last discourse I spoke of the first gleam of mediumship, or the inflowing of the Divine current within me, having been experienced in the former of the two cities I described in last lecture. I did not experience it in the form of what you term "Trance," but an inspiration, far above anything I had known on earth, took possession of me, and, when in the latter city, I thus addressed those who surrounded me: "Oh! nation—many of you gathered from all parts—behold but a simple stranger, who, by the knowledge obtained, and the influences emanating from those of a neighbouring city, is now able to speak to you. Surrounded by the mysterious emblems of your religion, bound together by your sacred ties, I am here, not to abuse you or to seek to stir within you ire, but rather to attempt to raise a sympathy for your own natures. I am here as a messenger, perhaps not altogether welcome; but, rest assured, I am one whose good intentions flow spontaneously towards you. You whom I see gathered here, some of you from climes far apart, whose cast of spiritual features and dark brows remind me of the old stories told of the Hebrew people of earth. I can scarcely separate you from the reminiscenes engendered by the stories as recounted of those people, and I am here with the sole wish

Digitized by Google

to do you good. Where the language and ideas come from, in which I now speak to you, I know not, but they come flooding through my spiritual organism like water from a brook. I stand upon your pavements, where I know that you rarely allow those of a different caste from yourselves to stand. I am here to lift your sight away from the small and narrow circle which confines you. I will instil into you different inclinations from any which you ever knew in your spiritual existence. I am hand-in-hand with you, bound by the tie which I know to be true, that there is One only Who rules by His Works, both in the world on which I first trod and in the spheres where I now dwell. You have done harm by your own baneful influences, but let me implore you to sever your connection therewith, and, as the light sparkles from ocean's glittering waves, so shall there shine from your souls a more refulgent light, casting an illumination on that onward path which leads to eternal bliss. Oh! ye most ancient nation! remember well that it is your duty to seek out Truth—that you are a people of God—though not in a special sense, as you have been taught to believe, for all are alike in His regard. I could wish to open to your vision in one moment the grand and mighty truths which have dawned upon my understanding; but time will be required to explain to you the process which led me to become enlightened—time will be necessary to expatiate upon the people and scenes of the many grades of the spheres through which I have passed, a contemplation of which has urged me to do good to the full measure of my convictions and power. And in response to those convictions, and for the purpose of testing my power, I am now among you pleading the Cause of Truth, whose bright light I see shining beyond and above you. Awake! and let the powers within shine forth in a more glorified reality, that you may know your Creator and your God. I sympathise with you in the position

Digitized by Google

you are in, and I look at you with the fondest of brotherly affection."

After giving flow to the thoughts that stirred within me, I felt strongly impressed that the influence thus inspiring me was passing away. I had felt almost similar sensations upon earth, where I had frequently been under impressional influences, and I longed to know whence they came. I am able to say that, looking back to the time when that delightful influence impelled me to speak before that Jewish community, I have since seen the little spark burst into a flame, and that flame has spread, not only over hundreds and thousands, but over countless millions of spirits, and, in doing so, has helped to bring down that debasing passion of avarice in them. And, at the same time, I have since visited the exact place, and been able once again to mix among them. I know their feelings and their strivings after the glorious and eternal truth.

I was next taken away and shown numbers of synagogues, which, as I said before, were formed and elaborated in exactly the same style of execution as the olden synagogues of earth, all the emblems of their religion were there. Each edifice stands now, not as a monument of superstition, but as an image of brilliant, glowing light; and their religion—reformed as it is—is now gathering thousands of the same nation under its wing. Strip them of their one evil passion, and there is not a nation I can admire more, for it must be allowed they are a great and mighty people, within whose souls, in time to come, when this development has more extended upon earth, will burn an eternal lamp of fire for truth's sake. Within each individual soul, be it Jew, Mahometan, or any other sect, where it is not yet enkindled, it lies smouldering, and will surely one day give forth a light that will illumine the future —the immortal existence.

I went forth from this city with my guide, and travelled at rather a rapid speed. We approached "a world" composed of

Digitized by Google

a people you term Chinamen. This nation exists in great masses in this sphere, and occupies an area far larger than that of your earth. Here the greatest industries are carried on, for they are equally as industrious as the people of the same nation are on the physical plane. They have their houses, and are very ingenious in bringing certain inventions to light. In making personal adornments for those in spirit life they are very clever. There is an innocence which surrounds them that renders easy the task of governing them. That they are docile is easy to be seen by one who travels through their different grades; and they are willing to receive the light when it comes home to them in such a manner as that they can believe it. Taking them as a class they are susceptible to impressions from the whisperings of Nature, which, reverently interpreted, awake within the meditative mind momentous thoughts of eternity. They do not cling tenaciously to their old indigenous and superstitious creeds, but resign them without regret for any they consider preferable and nearer akin to truth. As buds adorn the rose-tree, so unknown influences pervade this sphere, and they blossom forth and shed their light, not for the benefit of the few, but of the many.

I travelled through this plane, noticing its inhabitants to be, one and all, bound together, and that thousands constantly kept coming in from other grades.

We bore away to the far north. Here I found not only a change of scenery, but a change in the climate was also very apparent. Having traversed a considerable distance, the prospect assumed an appearance as if the whole were decked in a raiment of white. Naturally anxious to know where we were going, I asked my guide with what particular portion of earth's people we were next to come in contact. "With those who lived in what are designated the 'Arctic Regions,'" was the answer; "and I wish there to show you that Nature is as

Digitized by Google

true as she possibly can be, and, being thus true, God must be so likewise. He knows all the different traits and characteristics of the human family, and this knowledge has resulted in each individual being placed in a locality and climate that are adapted to his nature. Behold the glistening tips of the trees! How beautiful they look! How really pure looking is the scene here! It brings your soul into such a state of rapture that it becomes absorbed in the contemplation of the infinite attributes of its Almighty Creator!"

We were brought quickly into what seemed a large town, and I saw people and scenes, a description of which I had read when a boy. This is the locality where the "Northerners," those who were born and existed in those cold climes to the north of your earth, take up their abode. I noticed among them all the peculiarities of which I had read descriptions in my youthful days. They wore the counterparts of the fur-skins adapted to the climate they were in when upon earth.* I went up to some of them, thinking I could enter into conversation, but I was soon undeceived upon that point, for we understood not a word of each other's language. I found that, apart from having been divested of the body, they were just the same as when upon earth. Spirits of a higher grade came down to teach them, as many were far from being of educated minds. Finding I could gain no information from them we passed on, and, not wishing to go farther north, we retraced our steps to what you would term "the Sunny South," and as we proceeded thence the climate became more genial. I turned to my guide with the question—"Does the cold have

* Everything on the mundane plane, except fire, has its spiritual counterpart or correspondence, and it appears that of the clothes which we have worn here, through being impregnated with our magnetism, their spiritual counterparts retain a strong attraction to the wearer, who, when in spirit-life, has only to exercise his power of will to obtain the spiritual counterpart of any particular garment worn by him when on earth.

Digitized by Google

the same effect upon those we have left behind as it had upon myself?" "No!" he answered; "those spirits were inured to low temperature in their first state; and, therefore, were acclimatised to extreme cold ere they came, consequently, they are at home in that (to you) inhospitable clime. If you wish to travel you must put up with the consequences; you cannot gain the knowledge you seek without experiencing some little inconvenience."

As we passed along I observed that the country was very thinly populated. I asked—"Who are these who live so far from any centre of civilisation?" "These are spirits," I was told, "who had not been, when upon earth, of an ambitious turn of mind, and were desirous of entering into the same species of life here as that which engaged their attention in the earth-life. This is what would be, in the physical or first sphere, called 'country life,' where the various objects of inanimate nature—or what are designated such—may be the silent companions of those who wish to study the only true and infallible Bible—the great Book of Nature—whose pages are ever open to the inquiring student. The bubbling streams and beautiful nooks around here are the music and delight of these people, who have always worshipped Nature, and prefer to reign with her in perfect harmony than reside in an overcrowded city, as so many elect to do." "And what, then," I asked, "are these spirits' ideas of Deity? Are they the same as our own?" "Friend," he replied, "how can you class yours as being the picture of anything, when thou art so completely at a loss to bring the soul's image of Deity to thy spirit-mind? But, by-and-bye, I will bring you to a learned spirit, who is about one of the oldest here, and you will see in the evening a sight that will do you good, you will then learn a spirit's idea of Deity." We passed along the road, speaking to several in our passage, and I could not but perceive and admire the beautiful looks

Digitized by Google

which beamed from them. Here, thought I, are they whom I wished to find; these are they who are *en rapport* with Nature; they are like Nature's children. They appeared to have no speech but their thoughts, and each one seemed to glow with friendship, and to read in the other's countenance the purity of innocence.

Passing up a long garden path, with trellis-work overhanging it, and beautiful flowers creeping in and out, whose fragrance, as it swept o'er me, I inhaled with gratitude and delight, we met a venerable sire or goodly spirit, around whose head a halo seemed to hover. We stepped up to him, he welcomed us as brothers, and we were immediately taken into a room, and I perceived that even luxury was there, but not lavishly expended. In their simple style of decorating the place and making it look so beautiful, there was denoted the most perfect harmony in their tastes. "Most learned Sire," said my friend, "here is one who is travelling through the spheres for knowledge, and whose God, when upon earth, was Nature. He has been for some time, I may say, in the spheres, and yet cannot bring to his mind any idea of the Creator. Dost thou know such a Being or Person?" I saw a smile play o'er his face as he answered: "Ah! you have done like others. God will let you seek Him if you will, but you have let Him pass through your fingers! Now, we will show you our idea of Deity, and the beauty of a pure mind, and then you may, in a certain light, be enabled to receive a small idea of Deity." "No matter how small or great," I exclaimed, "give me only one faint glimpse, and I upon that glimpse can meditate; upon that standard I shall acquire so fast a hold that I could stand and see the clouds break away like magic in Deity's Form! I have travelled far. Canst thou tell me, sir, where I can learn, or where to find the Image that I seek? When upon earth I had thought of conjuring up miraculous agencies, and at times I saw spirits pass before my

Digitized by Google

vision, who awoke within me an influence that seemed beyond my powers of comprehension. I would, indeed, if possible, give half my spiritual existence if thou wouldst draw the curtain. If there be a Deity—and thou canst gratify me—show Him to me at once!" "Sire," he thus addressed me, "thy voice is quick and rapid, thy sayings are like enchanted utterances that burst upon the ear as light breaks upon the morning, or like the music that swells upon the air at eve. But there are many bright and great thoughts which you should cultivate, to become in a fit state to receive the idea of Deity. Of hell I have seen nothing but *what was within the spirit-form.* Divers black and dreary imps of eternal darkness I have beheld none, though I have seen the spirit-form racked by a power which seemed to place it in a strait. Worse than this I have seen nothing; though I have tarried long in the sphere you now are in, and have looked like you, yea, for many many years of earthly time. If you only study aright, you at length will perceive throughout His domains the mysterious workings of Deity. Continue to cultivate your thoughts in such a manner that you may be enabled, even in some degree, to think of Deity. Yours has been a craving of long standing, and I see, from on high, channels of deep thought have been opened, and I can further see that you possess many mediumistic powers. You are also gifted, I perceive, with a great deal of curiosity, which I hope will urge you on to progression." "Oh! friend," I said, "Let me only gain knowledge that I may return to earth again to show that to be false which I had conjured up, and impart the truth and the reality. Let me knowledge gain for such a purpose as this. If you will only unfold to me these great and mighty truths I will return and communicate the thoughts to those who thirst for a knowledge of the grand reality, thousands of whom will gladly hear me. Give me, I pray thee, but a glimpse of that which I require." Then, as if by magic, a peal of bells

Digitized by Google

chimed forth. "Come here, my friend," he continued, "and I will show you how Deity is worshipped here by the enjoyment in gratitude of all His manifold blessings." He took me by the arm, and there was a soft feeling of brotherly love in his touch. He led me forth to a beautiful grass lawn, upon which were about four hundred spirits, all apparently enjoying themselves to the utmost. Around, and for some distance beyond, the borders of this lawn flowers grew in the most beautiful profusion. They stood erect without any other support than that which they received from each other, for the various plants occasionally met together and embraced, forming here and there the most gorgeous arches, beautified by the light and shade falling upon each, whose splendid colours were thus enhanced to an exalted degree. . . . Even those philosophers of high scientific attainments upon earth are unable to penetrate the secrets of this beautiful perfection of Nature. They simply observe the outward form of the plant; they see, and perhaps admire the rose, but they imagine not there is a current leading from that flower which passes forth and spreads a gentle influence over the whole creation. Good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XIII.

DELIVERED 18TH JANUARY, 1875.

GOOD EVENING. The rapidity * of the entrancement to-night was in consequence of the state of the atmosphere. We wish not to lose valuable time, for the atmosphere has all the appearance of a marked change.

Where I left you when last speaking to you was on the grassy lawn, where some beautiful spirits—the bright inhabitants of these pearly lands—were employed in enjoying themselves. I will try and convey to your minds the beautiful quietness that reigned over the whole proceedings, as I stood and gazed upon them. I noticed that each form was so transparent that the veins could be seen palpitating in their spiritual bodies, whose graceful movements seemed to require no exertion, and everything appeared to work with the most perfect harmony you could imagine. The scene impressed me with the conviction that the acme of spirit culture, harmony, and understanding, was here attained. I thought how far, indeed, are those on earth behind when they cannot even comprehend such a state of existence! You may fancy that we are apt to paint these scenes in too glowing colours, but they can never, in earthly language, be decked with the ruby freshness in which they exist. The grandest expanses of Nature which you can possibly see upon earth can never convey to your minds one jot of the reality here. Therefore, to those who, having read these descriptions, may pass adverse

* The medium had scarcely adjusted himself in his chair when he became entranced this evening.

Digitized by Google

criticisms, and say "they are too highly coloured," I repeat they fall as far short of the reality as the rays of a common candle-light do to the glittering of the sunbeams. Picture them above man's level—above man's scenery, and you instantly lose him—he understands it not. If he could be placed in his rough and crude state to witness one of these ineffable scenes it would look to his mind like some passing freak of Nature, which awoke his intellect for a few short minutes, and then passed away in a breath of air, leaving merely a fleeting recollection behind. I observed that, among this harmonious throng, no language was used, so perfect was the harmony which united them, their thoughts being linked together by the purest of sympathetic ties. When in the company of some loved companion, friend, or acquaintance, each one here present has had, I dare say, his thoughts occasionally anticipated when about giving expression to them by language; so there, for this unspoken language is inherent and intuitive. Harmony, sympathy and love, form the chain which binds spirits of refinement and culture together. The currents of their thoughts and affections run as smoothly as the messages of your telegraph wires.

After enjoying these amusements I was naturally anxious to elicit the opinions of those spirits concerning Deity, and how they pictured Him to their minds. As the question, which I put upon this subject, died away, the music gently subsided into low, sweet tones, reminding me somewhat of the melody emanating from the distant ringing of bells in woodland villages upon earth, when all Nature is calmly sinking into repose, and the silence is only broken by the noise of those nocturnal birds, whose nature it is to love darkness better than light. Resting upon beautiful seats, but not reclining on them, these spirits seemed to enjoy the delicious repose and serenity of their existence. One of them, who appeared to be of a superior brightness, stepped forward, and greeted me in

Digitized by Google

these words, "Stranger, thou art welcome to this home. Here you have anxiously enquired to know our opinions and conceptions concerning Deity. Therefore, we will give you them, and you can take them for what they are worth. In your mind we see a doubt. You fancy at times that there is no Controlling Power; but we will give you an instance of the fallacy of such a fancy. Deity is not what He was first taught to you—a Personal Being; for He, the Divine Ruler, is not of a shape and form that can be truly depicted by either mortal or spirit He is beyond the spirit's power of vision. Let spirits soar to the greatest heights they can climb, they yet are as far from realising the proportions of that Being as they were when in the body. Deity—as far as spirits' conception of that August Being has extended—is neither clothed in the raiment nor crowned in the emblem of man's imagination and teaching, but each flower, each (miscalled) inanimate object is a reflex of Him who has been so unworthily misrepresented. Man's ingenuity can imitate almost anything; but at LIFE he stops short! With all his inventive faculties man cannot bring to life a fly; with all his skill and knowledge, such a restoration defies him. But how can we picture Deity? Through the scenes you have travelled, through those bright fairy lands, far o'er mountains reaching up to that purple sky which o'erhangs your head, He is there—Deity is there! Take you the flight of millions of miles, and in every footstep of that space does Deity pervade—glorious in His Being, because He permeates everything. He is so great and yet so fine that even the spirits' imagination droops before the task of painting anything sublime enough. All shout with glorious and grateful voices: 'Deity is here—Life and Deity are there!' Thou, who hast seen numerous grades of the spiritual form, hast perceived that many even in the spirit-state still imagine that Deity wears a crown. With every accession of knowledge does the intervening distance which separates the

Digitized by Google

Creator from the creature appear to increase; the creature's brightest conceptions of the Creator must fall immeasurably short of the grand verity! Friend, awake! Deity neither requires you to picture nor imagine Him. He is there with you in your being—bursting forth into spontaneous life in everything."

(After a short pause, the control resumed his lecture by saying):—Let us here take a retrospective view of the path I trod during my short sojourn on earth. Mark every step of my career. The monuments that they have raised for me and mine I remember with gratitude; monuments which in their estimation are so grand, but yet so odd compared to those monuments that I have seen in lands above, so bright indeed that I could hardly bear to look upon them. Those who on the earth erected these monuments to cherish my memory and perpetuate my name as they fondly thought, were not, as I am, aware that the characters traced by my pen were clothed in the thoughts of others, so that by no unaided merit of my own am I entitled to those so-called honours conferred upon me. Men who do noble deeds on earth are oft forgotten, but their works are left behind, which occasionally kindle in some a flame of devotion for their authors.

I, when upon earth, could not understand the Deity's form that was portrayed to me, but to my mind's eye I pictured that Being as a Creator so vast—so unutterably vast—that I deemed the earth as unworthy even to be His footstool! But where was He? Upon a Throne? Nay. I did not imagine Him thus; or seated on a cloud watching earth. His eye hath no need to pierce the canopy of earth for any especial object there; for His immutable Laws are both His Lieutenant and Vicegerent, needing no supervision, since, like Himself, they are unerring and infallible. He being *in* everything sees everything, and is confined by no space or time. 'Tis strange—'tis passing strange—that man has kept Him penned up for so long

Digitized by Google

in a place called "heaven!" What a small garden it appears to hold Deity! A small place indeed when compared to the vast expanse of worlds you can behold even from the earth, which expanse is finite when placed in comparison with the infinitude of the worlds beyond! It is simply impossible for man in his present state to picture anything above himself. Long have I searched, and to a certain extent my search has been rewarded, for it must be Deity who glows with such love upon this portion of His creation, and confers upon it eternal bliss.

After lingering here for some time—'tis useless to say how long—we once more started on our journey, which was in a north-easterly direction, and as we proceeded I observed there came around me what was very beautiful, viz., the silvery and sparkling rays sent forth by many of the planets, whose reflected light, as viewed from your stand-point, resembles more the golden than the silvery. This incandescent light I ascribed to the proximity of my view of the revolving orbs. I began to question my guide as to where I was being led. "To a place," he answered, "where those who had enjoyed every luxury when upon earth were taken on leaving that plane of life. Those who were most talented and brilliant are there with their followers and admirers. There also are many who were kings, and who up to this moment fancy themselves still so! I know you will look upon them as lost, wretched beings, but they are not so, they are only blighted. When upon earth they were so inflated with the idea of being kings and princes that they even began to imagine they were the equals of the Divine Ruler Himself! But they cannot be cured of these false ideas at once, they must be taught. Let me ask you how could you possibly know the way to do anything if you had never been shown it? There are many here who look upon their case in a similar light, and know that they will be better instructed by-and-bye." We passed on

Digitized by Google

through rich parterres studded with trees, and what seemed to be lemon groves. The turf was of a light and mossy description, which imparted a delightful elasticity to the tread as we walked upon it. The trees were gnarled and twisted as if they had been wrenched by some great force, displaying a whimsical and fantastic appearance. We drew nigh to some splendid-looking mansions, whose exteriors were decorated in the English style, many of the old historic scenes being illustrated on the stones. Before one of the most sumptuous-looking of these I stopped, and, pointing to it, enquired of an attendant who stood under the portico in front—"Friend, who lives there?" "Our honorable king lives here," he replied. "We watch and guard him." "Do you notice that you have passed through any change?" I further questioned. "We believe that we have passed through some change, but we cannot really understand it." "Hast thou," I said, "any religion? If so, what is it? for in such a subject we are particularly interested." "We have no religion," he returned; "we have our king and queen, as well as our friends; we do their bidding, and comply with their wishes." "Happy state of ignorance," thought I. "Do you wish to see our king?" he asked. "I do." We were shown into a large ante-chamber. There were no pictures or decorations of any kind in it, but, from many indications, I perceived that some enlightenment had even come to this people, but they seemed to centre all their thoughts upon their king. The only way I can account for this is that in olden generations they were enthralled and bound down to such a degree by their kings and princes that the feeling of homage engendered thereby had not yet worn off. Still it bears out the grand secret of Nature, that man cannot change so rapidly after his transference from earth as is generally imagined. Everything goes to prove that the objects of a man's interest and desires while upon earth still continue to be his delight in the spheres until

Digitized by Google

the desire for knowledge awakens him to the darkness he has brought with him. In fact, he takes his peculiarities with him, and is drawn to them by the law of attraction or affinity.

I cannot here refrain from congratulating you upon the freedom from despotic sway, on the part of rulers, which you of this generation now enjoy, compared to which man's existence a few centuries back was wretched in the extreme, when oppression, ignorance and superstition, were rampant throughout the nations—the fiat of whose monarchs was law. This happy change is a good omen of the eventual banishment of ignorance and superstition from the world, when despotism of all kinds will be a thing of the past.

While waiting in the ante-chamber, into which we were shown, the following soliloquy came into my mind: "O ye kings, princes, and queens! Decked in all the splendour of earthly robes to whom precious stones were brought, and thrown as dust at your feet by your ignorant vassals! Lives have been scattered as chaff before the wind to gratify your insane ambition, souls were cut away to satisfy your demands: those lives, however, sacrificed there by you, flower in glorious profusion here. Thousands are still spiritually pressed and bound here who were fettered by you on earth. They cannot be liberated at once from the effects of the thraldom, or the unnatural deaths, entailed upon them by your wickedness."

From the ante-chamber we were led up a flight of steps, the summit of which was the precinct to the grand hall, into which we were ushered after some delay. There were a throne and a crown in this hall, and presently I saw one who never was a credit to England. His name I shall not mention, as names are best kept back, but we will glance briefly at some portions of his reign upon earth, which was fraught with so much misery to his subjects. His identity will be gained by the allusions which I shall make regarding him. There he stood,

Digitized by Google

the picture of what I had imagined him, his upper lip curling in the same haughty way that it did upon earth ; the quick agitation of the spirit-hand as it moved from one thing to another ; the nervous and rapid strides when moving—all the same peculiarities which had characterised him in his earth-life, and as I stood and looked upon him I could not but conclude that his state was not an enviable one. I noticed that a sort of tremulousness came over him as he spoke. I addressed him and said, "I see thy frame doth quiver ; thou needst not fear me, for I am not thine avenger. Still, thy uneasy conscience, which I can see, is not at rest." In a moment there occurred such a scene as I ne'er beheld. He staggered back—his whole frame vibrating with fearful emotion—and sank into a chair. "What, friend, dost thou see?" I hastily asked. "I will tell you," he gasped. "It was horrible. The greatest curse I ever had were these clairvoyant powers, which force upon me the sight of thousands of souls that I sent into eternity. I see the field of battle. I see all the foul and villainous wrongs perpetrated by me in the different stages of my earthly life. I cannot wipe the vision from my sight. It is true—it is not mockery—it is reality !"

My own spiritual eyesight now opened, and I witnessed psychometrically a scene which I hope never to see again. I heard a distant groan or cry for mercy, when I saw a sight so horrible that I, also, was compelled to seat myself in a chair for support. The feeling of stupor which had seized me having passed away, I saw a woman whose purity was spotless. I could hear her sigh, yet could not draw near enough to help her and tear her murderer away. I saw the whole thing quicker than I can pass words through the medium's organization to relate the scene. I saw her very soul wishing to break away. Around her arms were chains, fastened to ring-bolts in the gloomy dungeon, whose dismal surroundings were revealed

Digitized by Google

by the imperfect rays of a dull light, which only served to impart additional gloom to the sombre scene, and make it ten times more horrible to behold. From this dungeon I saw her dragged into the court-yard of the castle, whose walls had witnessed many a foul scene of murder. I there saw them sever her head from the body, which became convulsed for a moment, quickly succeeded by the cold pallor of death o'erspreading the form, as well as the countenance of the now severed head. I saw the spirit rise and depart from the scene of such an atrocious murder. And here was the monarch who wore the golden crown, and who was now before me robed in gorgeous raiment, magnificent to behold. Thus he said: "Would to heaven I had the power to shake the vision from my sight, for I cannot rest either day or night. I cannot breathe. It was a horrible death I passed through; but this is worse than such a death, for the torments are of a still more horrible description." I then spoke, saying, "Not the smallest part of this terrible torture will be remitted until you consent to cast off that robe and crown." He sank down and instantly vanished from my sight, thus abruptly terminating my address.

I shall now draw my lecture to a close for this evening. I have to request, before relieving the medium from the trance, your attention for a few moments. At the seance succeeding the one following upon this I shall treat of a particular portion of Nature's laws, during the expounding of which perhaps it would be better for the ladies to be absent. The ladies, if they choose, may read the description, but I would rather convey it to the male portion only of the circle. The subject is the birth of infants into the spirit-world. I told you in one of my former lectures that I should return to this particular matter again.

I will here repeat to you, as far as I can, the words which passed between another monarch I met and myself. "Oh!

Digitized by Google

friend," said he, "if thou art one, tell me—say—where is night —where is day? I have travelled o'er dismal scenes; I have struggled through swamps dark and dreary—through woods and valleys also—but cannot find my people or my country. Canst thou tell me where to find them? When upon the earth a golden crown did deck my head, and thousands of my subjects used to bow down before me. The thing I have left behind they bless—they adore; whilst I, poor miserable being, lack even nourishment" "Friend," I asked, "if thou hast been so long travelling, hast thou not found what thou seekest?" "No," he replied, "when upon earth I tried but to satisfy my many selfish appetites. I studied not the happiness of the people I was called on to govern; but I thought them fools, instead of feeling grateful to them, for supporting me in the manner they did." "Then," returned I, "fools they would be, indeed, to associate now with you, and, doubtless, another is now wearing your crown, while you have none. But, friend, I will tell you what to do. If you will come with me, I will show you the place where you can live at ease; and if you only choose to cultivate the spiritual life that is within you, it will adorn your spiritual brow far more brightly than all the crowns or treasures you ever dreamt of. Instead of thinking of these treasures past and gone, deck thyself in these flowers of wisdom and make thyself a crown of them; and having placed it upon thy brow, see how ridiculous is thy vain desire to exact worship from thy fellow-beings." Spirit cannot worship spirit long, although there are some I have just left behind who really do worship their king, but at what a sacrifice! Good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XIV.

DELIVERED 22ND JANUARY, 1875.

GOOD EVENING. I shall not proceed with a long lecture to-night, as I am going to draw your attention to what might be termed the last grade but one in the third sphere.

Last evening I left you after describing the grades where some crowned heads were tarrying or staying. To-night it is my intention to give you a description of the spirits, who, when upon earth, were deeply depressed from a sense of those harms and wrongs which too often cling around the human family, I mean those who have been left without father or mother or anyone else to protect them. Their minds become crushed, and, tottering under such a load of misery, the proper and healthy developement of these dejected spirits is stayed, and the consequences are that it takes some time to retone in these minds the spirit that has been so cast down, for, to a great extent, it has lost its power through the oppression it underwent while it was inhabiting the shell or physical body.

We travelled along, and came to what seemed to be a village, which I was given to understand had been founded by one of the noblest of women who had lived upon your earth. She was of an exceedingly benevolent nature, and her inclinations were naturally the same here, and so this little town was founded, and became inhabited by a class of spirits to whom her noble sympathies would be attracted, and who were existing under her guidance. These spirits, with whom I wish to bring you in contact, had, in the earth-life, laboured under all the trials and difficulties attendant upon extreme

Digitized by Google

poverty, and the effect of their trying circumstances had been so powerful as to induce, in the early stages of their spirit-life, a state or tendency to continued dejection. The only simile to such a state that I can give you is this :—Behold a widow left upon this earth with nought to sustain her, with not a mite to procure the necessaries for her starving children, who become emaciated and diseased for want of food. The things needful for the support of human life are wanting to this poor widow and little ones. There is absolutely nothing to satisfy the natural cravings of hunger. The widow is like an outcast, she is starving whilst there is plenty around her. This, perhaps, she could bear with some degree of fortitude, but her children's state is an aggravation of unextinguishable distress, (I have seen the poor, innocent things appeal with all their childish eagerness to their mother for something to eat, but she had nothing), she looks upon them with unspeakable sorrow when thinking of her powerless and impotent condition. Like a flower that has just bloomed for a little while, the stalk begins to wither, the leaves begin to crumble away, and the flower fades. It is the same with this poor soul, her life has not been ended in a natural way or by natural causes, but the cord under a strain so contrary to nature was severed, and she was looked for by her babes, but in vain; her spirit had departed! Now, to those who bestride the ceremonious horses of Religion, whose hoofs are shod with silver, whose stirrups are made of gold, and whose trappings comprise all that you hold precious, to you I say: "Here is a soul in real distress; stretch out a helping hand; aid it if you can; illustrate, by example, the precepts which you profess to believe and teach, and thus confer an undying benefit upon yourself, as well as upon the object of your charity!" But it too frequently happens that these professors turn away; though they were reared to worship God, yet they allow God's children to perish at the threshold of their homes!

Digitized by Google

In not taking efficient steps to protect the bodies of their poor and wretched subjects Governments are also reprehensible, for it is a sacred duty that should not be neglected; if so, the spirits of the miserable outcasts suffer. In time—and time only—can the instrument be retuned and brought to a state of harmony.

I have seen the spirit-mother return to earth with love in every portion of her being, and—thinking of her own tender little ones left there without one protecting hand, but He who rules o'er all, to guide them—bear away to a better life the wretched and distracted beings who have been homeless and friendless. This is where those poor souls are brought and made comfortable, and it is from here that messengers are constantly going to earth to attempt the succour of these suffering ones. Frequently the mother, being weak, and unable to tread the ladder to earth as often as she could wish, cannot forget the loved sufferers she has left behind her, and is naturally anxious to hear about them. There are, therefore, messengers constantly bringing intelligence to her concerning them.

We will now enter the village I spoke of, where I noticed that all the houses were of limited dimensions, and everything connected with them was of a plain character—nothing elegant to be seen. Here the spirit is brought and put into a magnetic sleep under the power and direction of those who are deputed or empowered to act such a part. This restores a tone to the deadened faculties, and makes the spirit in time glorious to look upon, because it is the pure influence of angelic spirits. Here, even in the spirit-world, each one leans upon the other. I afterwards saw another class, viz., those who had been killed in the bloody and fiery battles for their countries' sake. I would like to say something concerning these spirits. I have often heard the question asked in circles, "How does a spirit fare whose body has been blown to pieces

Digitized by Google

in the carnage of battle?" It lingers with the particles of the body for a brief space, when its parts leave, and with great rapidity amalgamate till the whole structure is made perfect. (Such a spirit requires careful attendance, and it is with difficulty that it assumes the spiritual existence after having been subjected to such a death.) It opens its eyes upon its new existence as a person on your planet does who has been suddenly awakened from a profound slumber of prolonged duration; it looks astonished and gazes about in amazement! There is no pain attendant on a sudden death; the spirit subsequently suffers, but the body does not suffer pain at the time of dissolution. I have seen every nerve and sinew, every vein and fibre of the new-born spirit quivering like electricity when the light of the spirit-world was dawning upon it. I have seen them vibrate in somewhat a similar manner to the northern and southern lights which you term "Auroras." I have seen the form, as it began to work and sustain the spiritual existence, gradually cast away that aura which was unfit for it. The spirit of such an one will also feel a difficulty in breathing at the first dawn of the spirit-life, because the spirit naturally thinks he is awakening to his old earthly life, and tries to draw a quick breath, as a person does immediately after having recovered his senses from the effects of some sudden stupor.

I wish here to speak of those who suffer instant death in war brought on by the cruel selfishness and ambition of others. There are many excuses for the former class, but the way in which they enter the battle field is wrong, for there reckless thoughts too often predominate.

Justice being the grand law by which the Great Ruler of the Universe deals impartially with all—punishing only those who deserve it—it is they who have needlessly plunged their country into the horrors of war, who have to fear its Divine Equity, for the beautiful structure that was rent in pieces like

Digitized by Google

an earthen jar for the mere amusement and gratification of some proudly-crowned head will not go unavenged.

Oh! monarchs, as you sit upon your gilded thrones and dictate to those whom you have been called on to govern, remember that you are but clay, which you will be compelled some day to relinquish, when the necessity for your reformation will be forced upon you. You seem to forget in your proud ambition that the existence of your fellow-men is as dear to them as your own is to yourself; but you cannot always rule, thy sway will one day terminate. Thy aspiring pride upon earth is merely to deck thy body with the gems and feathers of other lands. Listen! Though great has been thy sway over many lands and peoples, the time is on the wing when thou wilt surely awake to another day; when repentance for the wrongs thou hast perpetrated will be urged upon thee, and all the cruel and bloody scenes thou hast enacted, or were the cause of being enacted, will periodically pass before thee as a panorama, and in thy torments thou wilt see with loathsomeness the crown thou once did wear, and thyself as thou wert decked, like a peacock with its feathers outspread. The present passing scenes fade away, and thou wilt then see thyself clothed in thy natural suit, which is of a dark, dark colour, in consequence of the blood thou has shed and the sorrows thou hast caused! You will awake to another day bright and clear; but there will be darkness and clouds hanging around thee until you have released the bond which kept you so fast bound to earthly clay!

Many seek in wars to indulge merely their own inordinate and wicked ambition, and do not risk their lives for love of country, but that they may be called heroes, warriors, and conquerors! Let us here pause a moment and think well of these things. When once those cruel wars have been things of the past, and man's intellect has at last been released; when the sunbeams enter into his darkened soul, quickening

Digitized by Google

the faculties which have so long been lying dormant and useless; when man no longer takes the sword and perpetrates foul crimes for vengeance or ambition; when he can say, "I know the laws which govern my being;" then will the world understand itself better, then will the inhabitants be more spiritual, then the universal passion of trying to be rulers will disappear, and man will take his stand upon his own merits. All things, however, were not made in one minute, and are not brought to perfection in one day; but the law of progress will inevitably make itself felt—the flag of liberty, with her brightest colours, shall float out to the breeze, and incite men to try and beat down the vast array of errors, and raise the standard of truth and thereby advance!

We perceive a great difference here in the state of those spirits who were wretched and crestfallen when on earth, in consequence of the unhappy circumstances in which they were placed. Here they are gently and kindly treated, and they now appear the happiest of all. The lights are opened to them, and they are the means of awakening thousands to their spiritual condition.

I now pass on, and leave this grade, and return once more to what is termed the "high" grade, the last grade in this sphere. I there found, when I had reached my destination, that my better half, or my wife—as you would term her in earthly language—was awaiting my coming. As I saw her at a distance she appeared to be still on the ladder of brightness, and her very soul seemed to sparkle from her eyes. She looked even younger and purer than when I last saw her, and she wore a peculiar dress, an apparent characteristic of which I will mention. The last one I attempted to describe was all white, and the dress she then appeared in was of the same colour, but it occasionally flashed out lights of red and blue, which illumined her beautifully symmetrical form to such a degree that I involuntary paused and looked at her in wonder.

Digitized by Google

Such a short time had elapsd for the accomplishment of this (to me) marvellous transformation, that I was absolutely wonder-stricken! A rapid transition, indeed! That which had seemed to me so bright had become, as if by the touch of a magic wand, still brighter. I ascertained, by enquiring, that these lights are in consequence of the character or nature of the spirit, from whom they proceed, having become more superfine, and that they emanate, naturally, from the body. I dare say you have heard mediums—those who are classed as "seeing" mediums—say that they see lights about the spirits—lights proceeding from their foreheads or shoulders. Each spirit, as it rises into higher grades, assumes a brighter aura or light, until that light shines with so intense a brightness that it often dazzles the clairvoyant's powers of vision. *This is the reason why those spirits who return to earth generally appear in such clothing as they can be recognised in*, for if a spirit with its luminous brightness were to enter a circle without the clothing to conceal it, the clairvoyant would be utterly powerless to gaze upon it; he could as easily gaze upon the sun at noonday in the height of summer!

Beside my wife I beheld another spirit who belonged to a very high sphere. He spoke to me in these words:—"Thou hast travelled far, the time has come when into farther lands and scenes thou wilt roam. Another sphere thou hast to travel yet, and then a change will come o'er you bearing a slight resemblance to the one you experienced when passing away from earth. I allude to the change which is there termed "Death," but which we designate "The New Birth." I here interrupted him somewhat hurriedly, and anxiously asked:—"Surely I have not to pass through death again? I thought eternal day had begun to dawn upon my vision." "No, friend," he replied; "but the transformation is not painful as you think, you will not have a severe

Digitized by Google

struggle to rise to those spheres. The laws of Nature are so good and true that to comply with her precepts you must throw off all which is unfit for you to take to your new abode, when you will become like your wife in every sense. We will then place you together, so that instead of looking upon you as two, your souls, your nerves, your very feelings, may then be centred and joined together, and a coronet, not of diamonds, but of a simple ray of light, will adorn thy brows; far brighter, far purer than all the gems you have ever seen. In a short time I will return and take you both away."

Before drawing the lecture for this evening to a close, I may state I have two spirits here of different temperaments, and I will give you their thoughts through the Medium.

"Lonely as I climbed the wild and rocky paths of your earth, dreary was my life, as if the fierce battle were necessary to existence. No flowers adorned my path, none! From my childhood mine was a rough and thorny way, and then it seemed so hard that I should have been compelled to tarry there so long. Whilst I, poor, miserable creature, was eking out a precarious subsistence, I daily saw those who were endowed with God's richest gifts, adorned with flowers, beauty, wealth, and show. At last, groping and crawling in my dreariness along the earth, I met one on whose support I could lean, who promised to work for me. He was kind to me, and loved and cherished the little ones God subsequently gave us. But he was taken, and then in my blank despair, my brain working and twisting, I almost thought I should be a suicide. I cursed my God Who took him away, but now I know that God is full of love The shell of all that was so dear to me they placed in a common box and buried a few feet beneath the soil. My heart, my very soul, my life seemed to ebb away. Then I beheld my children pass away one by one, those little ones of whom he was so fond, and I was left with no money, no help, no show in the world, left to struggle on in

Digitized by Google

misery alone. At last I felt a sweet, pleasant sensation. I felt it coming like the dawning of another life. Upon my bed I was obliged to recline, it was a happy moment, and strange to say! I cannot tell how I passed through death to life. Good night."

The other spirit says:—"I am one who fought for my country's name and served, upon the battle-field, my king. I was young and strong and proud of myself, and I thought it was right to sacrifice my life for my king and country. I was decked in regimental colours, and had a sword and a cockade. No friends had I, and a reckless, roving life I led. Thoughts of war and glory had dazzled me, and I deemed myself a conqueror e'er I went to battle. I fought. I heard the crashing sound of musketry and the wild roar of the artillery. We were ordered forward. In the rushing charge I heard a crash, and all was o'er! . . . I slept. . . . I awoke in a scene I ne'er can forget, for some portion of the panoply of war had accompanied me from the battle-field, and it was with indescribable horror that I saw a figure, the counterpart of myself, besmeared in blood. I died, I slept, I awoke!" Good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XV.

DELIVERED 29TH JANUARY, 1875.

GOOD EVENING, GENTLEMEN. You will, I hope, excuse us for a certain amount of inconvenience* to which we are compelled to subject you to-night. But from not having such a number present as usual, the power is not quite so strong as we should wish it. The reason of my having been so exclusive in the arrangement this evening is not on account of that which, perhaps, some of you think, or those who are absent may think. I intend to give you a description both minute and close, and if those who read and study this address should deem any part wrong, we should be much obliged if they would cast it out. Another thing I would mention—the absent members of the circle are cherishing the idea that this lecture will be read to them. I wish them not to read it until it appears in its published form.

When entering upon the third sphere I spoke to you of having been drawn to a place where a certain class of infants were taken—infants whom the caprices of man (of the sacerdotal order) had consigned to either heaven or hell as it pleased them! Science has not yet found a way to account for the cases to which I allude; but I can tell you what becomes of infants, and whether the sins of their forefathers are visited upon them; or if they are responsible in any way or manner for those faults of their parents which entailed upon them physical defects.

* Owing to the absence of the three lady sitters (according to pre-arrangement), we were requested to place our hands upon the table and retain them there during the seance.

Digitized by Google

Now, in the first place, to illustrate this, I shall take Christ's birth, and analyse and treat it, and then we may branch from the trunk to the limbs of the subject.

It has been, and still is, said that Christ was man and yet was Deity—conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary! Now, Nature operates not only upon man, but upon all the lower animals, in regard to the propagation of species, equally as well—equally as perfect—as she does on the human family. If one man or one Deity, as has been said, was born through the laws of Nature having been suspended, surely those laws would not have been erratic for one case only. Nature, inclining more to prodigality than parsimony, would, ere this, have given you a multiplicity of Deities! The laws of Nature being fixed and immovable, it stands to reason that you would in the present day have as "miraculous conceptions" as they had when Christ was born.

Now let us understand this fully. Have you not thought of some of the inventions of man's ingenuity, and deemed them akin to the miraculous? One spark of electricity—one touch of the finger—and thoughts flash over your earth along the wires which intersect it! It is almost past belief! A man who would in Christ's day (to say nothing of the intervening times) have dared to speak of such things as within the bounds of probability, would have been instantly either crucified, stoned, or cut into a thousand pieces. Yet it has since been declared that the laws of Nature could be suspended! What a monstrous thing! What a wonderful thing if such ever should happen! And, being wonderful, it becomes doubtful; and being doubtful, and against all experiences of Nature's laws, it must be false, for Nature never lies, but man does. Let us take another standpoint. We, as well as yourselves, are apt to jump at conclusions, which, when analysed and looked into, make it difficult to imagine how we could have arrived at such a false conception of the subject. Now,

Digitized by Google

I ask of the honest mind, does it not in the same way make mistakes, thereby causing certain things to be placed upon a wrong foundation? The God of heaven and earth has ruled countless worlds besides yours for hundreds of thousands of years; and yet in all that time not one of His laws has deviated one iota from the groove wherein He placed it. Everything works in perfect harmony. He does not suspend those laws now, nor did He then.

Let us cast our thoughts backward into time, and think of the bigotry, the superstition, and the iron rule which swayed the masses, who were overawed and kept in subjection by the priests; for the priests were then kings and rulers of the world. These cunning and crafty religious officials, perceiving the opportunity which presented itself in the character and wonderful medial powers of Jesus, to impose on the credulity of mankind, deified a man who was conceived in the ordinary and natural way, and they possessed such administrative abilities for the task which they undertook, of propagating a new worship, by apotheosising Christ, that for 1,800 years this impious doctrine has obtained a place (the principal place) in the theology of a large proportion of earth's civilised people; but Christ's humility was far from accepting or encouraging such worship. Indeed there were far more of his contemporaries who said he was of the devil than there were of those who believed in his divinity. Christ himself could not believe in and sanction the blind idolatry and bigotry which o'erspread the face of the earth in his time.

I repeat that Nature was as consistent then as she is now. He, your Father, my Father, our Father, has not altered Nature since that day, but man would have it appear so. If you demand evidence, I say, behold the evidences of God your Father, that have existed these thousands of years; He who rules so truly is far more worthy of credence than is the word of man or woman. I say to those who are parents: if

Digitized by Google

it were said that such things, as were reported of Mary, at Bethlehem, had occurred in your midst, whose reputation would you weigh in the balance, your daughter's or that of Nature? whose laws stand as living and infallible witnesses, a pillar of brightness flashing upon the dark intellect of man, and whose truth he cannot impugn. If there is that one who can look upon that rock immovable and deny the fact, all I can say of him is, that he abuses the reason which God has given him.

We pass on to what is termed birth. Man when first brought into the world is of earth, but there is a certain spark or germ, whence has it come? from what river did it flow? from whose hand did it fall? It fell from the Hand of all Power, from the Fountain of all Brightness and all Truth Therefore I would say to those who affirm that infants are lost, there is no such thing as being "lost" in His kingdom; because being struck by the magnetic power, the link between mind and spirit, and being from His divine nature that it flows; it is a part of Himself, therefore it cannot be pressed out of sight or annihilated.

Now, let us understand another part before we proceed further. How about those images who do not reach the light in the ordinary course—who are not brought forward enough in Nature's laws to enable them to inhale or breathe the air surrounding your world? Are they lost. Echo answers back, "No!" not if their growth attains a certain stage. It is well known that the law pertaining to the propagation of the highest order of beings upon the earth is varied, but true. Those who have not been brought forward to the proper stage of development fit for the reception of the Divine germ are merely earth. It is necessary that a certain phase should be attained in the infolding of their growth, when what is termed "quickening" takes place, ere the light of the spirit enters—the spark of electricity from His own hand, and its sparkle

Digitized by Google

never dies! Let us follow it. I will give you a picture of one. I saw a little image or spirit-fetus—it seemed like the bud of a rose. It passed away on the mother's right side, not taking the left on account of the heart and the various leading nerves. (In cases where death overtakes the mother before the healthy pangs of parturition occur, it generally arises from an undue amount of vital power having been drawn from the nerves of the heart, leaving the latter in a moribund state). I watched the little bud. It was received into a vessel, which was composed of beautifully light material, where the little one looked something like a caterpillar.

Let me now call your attention to the building, which I wished once before to enter but could not. This, at first sight, presented the appearance of a conservatory. As I looked into its interior the little forms distributed about somewhat resembled flowers. They appeared of different sizes, and I enquired the reason. I was told that these were the different stages of undeveloped forms which were prevented from reaching maturity upon earth, and I was further informed that when the proper moment arrives, when the exact second of time comes that they would have breathed the air of your planet (had circumstances not caused it otherwise), they are brought into spiritual existence in that sphere! So that, you will perceive, nothing is lost that once receives the Divine spark! But if not quickened by that Life the body passes away to the earth to which it belongs.

Let us take another case. Here is a child just born. All the fond hopes of both parents are centred upon it. They built all sorts of beautiful castles in the air concerning it. Everything is perfect about the child, whose loving mother, however, true to imperious and despotic custom, but unfaithful to the injunctions of Nature, compresses the body of her little pledge with what are not inaptly termed swaddling clothes to such an extent that its infantile and tender little

Digitized by Google

organs become cramped and suddenly fail ; and as Nature will not allow herself to be tampered with with impunity, the spark, so delicately connected with the little frame, is immediately extinguished ; it bursts away, and leaves the shell which it inhabited ! Oh! mother, learn from Nature, and henceforth, if thou art blest with a counterpart of that which has just departed from thee, commit not the error which has deprived thee of what thou loved so well. The lighter the garments, compatible with warmth, the better for those little bodies which require so much care and attention.

One more case. The spark of life is in another frame, another little rose which, in its earth existence the fond but deluded mother squeezed so unnaturally by its clothing that the delicate flower was spoilt. I will follow this infant and see where it goes. I was led forward into an inner room, and there I noticed these children. They were not ensconced in the same kind of vessels as the others, but they were simply laid in little cots that seemed to be formed out of leaves, and there was nothing enshrouding them but a little light drapery of beautiful texture. Each child is affiliated to a spiritual mother, such mothers being drawn from the ranks of those who loved children when upon earth as they loved their own lives, and to whom Nature had not been so bountiful as they wished, and having had no children of their own, they were delighted to adopt these. Such children are brought to earth again to gain that enlightenment they would have attained had they lived longer. Possessing no knowledge of earthly ties, they become thoroughly affiliated to their spiritual mothers. Such children may be said to be weaned in spirit ; their existence becomes welded or amalgamated, as it were, in that of their spiritual foster-mothers ; they are bound up in each other. Take a mirror in your hand and gaze into it until you are magnetised by it, your identity for the time being is thus merged in that of the mirror, so with the spiritual

Digitized by Google

mother, but in a more intense, more loving, and more beautiful degree.

Those infants who were in a less advanced state when they passed away from earth are not laid with these tender little buds whom I have described as being laid in cots, but are kept separate until they have reached a growth which will qualify them to enter the same establishment. The children of the senior development are divided and brought into groups, each child being taught after a certain space has elapsed to exercise his spiritual body. As little children with you are to be seen maintaining their equilibrium when learning to walk, by holding on to chairs and other things, so in the spiritual existence they are to be seen assisting themselves; *they must be taught to walk here before they can float.*

Now, many say that children suffer through their parents' transgressions (in a physical sense). Yes, I grant they do in a certain light, but it is the flesh that suffers, not the spirit, for a spirit cannot suffer unless it is itself the cause of its own disgrace, except transitorily in the case of violent death. It being a spark of eternal life, all is bright, it never can fade, and when passing through this stage it is beautiful to behold how sweet, how pure the little flowers are brought forward! All seems so simple, for their teaching is artlessly so, and easily understood. Children are not allowed to sit, to rest, or to associate with their elders here as with you, except to learn from the latter the knowledge which they can impart. A child in spirit-life manifests a keener aptitude for imbibing knowledge than did that same child ere divesting itself of its earthly covering. In the former state, too, it is exquisitely tender and susceptible, for the slightest discord affects it.

I passed farther on, and came to a large hall containing children of another class; they are what you denominate as "Twins." Let us examine them. They are of peculiar natures. Our spirit friend, Robinson, intended to have thrown

Digitized by Google

some light on this subject, but he has deputed me to impart the necessary information.

Upon earth you are apt to overlook the difference existing in twins in their vernal days. But in the spirit-life the dissimilitude, no matter how subtle it may be, is perceived. The spirit-child receives no nourishment but from those with whom it is in affinity, and when one loses vital power it unconsciously seeks it from the other, innocently, regardless of its predatory act. Take a semi-circular tube, with the extremities in a perpendicular position, and pour water into it, leaving a slight vacancy. If the curvature of the semi-circle rests perfectly even, the water at both ends will be on an exact level. Displace the curvature from its position in the slightest degree, depress one end more than another, and it instantly, by an inflexible law of Nature, robs its neighbour. It is the same with the two children who are produced together. They are frequently very difficult to rear, or to be brought to proper development on earth. One is so wrapt in the other that a reciprocal action is constantly in force, each taking away a portion of vitality from the other. When one is stronger than the other it secures more than its share of this vitality, and the first one it meets with in affinity, as it were, in this world, robs it as it did the other of its share of vital force. Are there then differences in the spheres? may be asked. The answer is this :—Being so when on earth it is the same in the spheres, and one mother could not take the two, because they would rob her—being of spiritual affinity—of essential vitality ; and, therefore, they are bound to be separated, and are so, the two foster mothers being in affinity with each child. Twins should never be together after birth until the lapse of four years, when the vital powers will have attained sufficient stamina to enable each child to resist all predaceous tendencies, for the magnetic power does not then pass so freely as it did before that age. This robbing of the magnetic

Digitized by Google

influence is the reason why twins frequently pass away after a very short existence upon earth.

Now let us see how spiritual children are brought into what you would call spiritual life when the little one passes from the mother still-born. I have watched one that was born dead to all appearances. I saw the little toes tremble, the knees bend, the spiritual life quiver up the legs and down the loins. The heart, small as it was, I could perceive, underwent the same sensation and worked with harmony. I could see the air pass from the lungs and a change come over it more rapid than even the short time in which I am attempting to describe it through the medium. I saw the faculties brighten, and a number of light spiritual forms gather round it and confer their influence upon it, and a spiritual mother was appointed for its guidance.

In the olden times, when people were deeply imbued with superstition, if a cripple or deformed child were born it was immediately said to have been sent as a curse upon the parents, that either father or mother must have been guilty of some great sin against God, Who had poured forth His great wrath upon the unborn being before it could even know or feel the power of sin! Are such people, who cherished and propagated so infamous a libel—so great a blasphemy—entitled to the appellation of rational beings, since no wrong could be perpetrated by a child before the spark of life had entered it? Deformities of the mould are, no doubt, caused by laws which could be made manifest to you under other circumstances, but which at present are inexplicable. What becomes of the deformed one? It bursts the mould of clay, and rises higher and higher in the life beyond. It no longer cares to tarry round its birth-place. It no longer cares to linger near that spot. It rises higher, and basks in the bright sunbeams of the spiritual world. In that region it expands, and becomes far nobler, brighter and truer, than even the

Digitized by Google

most fertile imagination could paint it. This is one reason why one suffering from a deformity should be considerately treated during its earth life. Another is that, by a psychological law, it may have had stamped upon it (apart from the inexplicable case above mentioned) in an aggravated form, some inherent or constitutional defect of one or both parents. It may be that the true origin of the malformation must be sought even further back than the immediate parents. It may even be necessary to revert to the ancestors of the latter to discover its cause. However, and wherever, the deformed being has inherited the blemish, it yet possesses that which has no defect. The spirit is intact—it has no spot or stain—it is as pure as pure can be. It glides away without having imbibed one single idea of evil. It surpasses the brightest substances you have ever beheld, or can even imagine. It pours forth its lucid, dazzling light, and rises to such a state of fineness and purity that it is useless for me to attempt to try and find words by which to picture it to you. Such is the way that these children are brought forward. This is the destiny of those children whose blemishes were formerly considered to have been stamped upon them by an avenging Deity, as retributive justice upon their parents! Healthier men and women, free from the many ills which at present beset the human family, will yet adorn the earth when their progenitors have studied and conformed more to the natural laws which govern them at present. Now, if there are any points in the lecture which are not fully understood, I shall be happy to explain them if you will pass the necessary questions through the Chairman.

Before I release the medium, I will take a spirit-child who will prompt me. These are her words :—"Earth to earth! ashes to ashes! dust to dust! Can anyone tell me where spirit goes? Does it return again to the earth, or is it gone for ever? Ah! can I remember if I on earth did roam?

Digitized by Google

No, for I was taken away before my roaming days did come. I often see the flowers that bloom upon your earth. They are not so beautiful as ours. They are coarser, and all your ingenuity cannot bring them to the perfection of those we have in our spirit-home. Bright are they, like the garments of Truth.

"Magnetic ties of love bind us together, and many and many a long, long day are we to have this joy. You, upon earth, think of time by minutes, hours, and days. Ours is measured by thoughs. You count years; we count space. Nothing can you find so beautiful as the loveliness that around me tarries. It was hard at first to breathe the purer air of my spirit-home. I could not then think how I was to reap the golden harvest of love.

"Shortly after that I started upon the path to earth, when I saw a little star, while fleecy clouds seemed hanging around it, like the frames I see around the pictures upon your walls. It was a bright light; and I could perceive the earth was only a star, and nothing more. It seemed so cold, so dreary, when they took me in what you call your morning air, and showed me what I there did see." "And what did you see?" (Question put by the lecturer.) "I saw this: when I first came to earth methought that I was borne along by the winds, and I there saw tens of thousands of the human family, and they seemed to be struggling in a mighty sea. I saw two armies; one they called Liberty, and the other Bigotry. A beautiful being stepped forward, robed, as it appeared to me, in the most lovely-coloured clouds. In her hands she held some keys, and presenting them to me, said: 'Give these to those struggling beings—they are the keys of Liberty and Peace. Instil into them the idea of Progress by love, by kindness, and by truth.'" Good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XVI.

DELIVERED 2ND FEBRUARY, 1875.

IN a previous discourse I brought you to a scene where there was a bridge whose pillars of beauty rose over the torrent which merrily dashed along on its heedless course.

The sight of this bridge and the surrounding scenery revived within me the recollection of my former visit, and I seemed to stand in view of some familiar place. When I was told that I should have to pass through more time and visit various scenes before I could traverse this beautiful bridge, or cross the enchanted gulf, I felt some fiery passion rise within me, and I left that scene with a feeling akin to disgust.

It was not a mere bridge like the structures which you designate by the same name in this world of yours, but a bridge which cast forth light, the beauty of which was magnificent in the extreme.

The cause of my having been drawn to it was owing to the influence of my wife, who, by her purer condition and higher state of feeling, aided by those who were more advanced, took me to that very spot, over which I at that time thought I could pass there and then.

A change in the interim had come over me, and I then felt mild and subdued as I came under the influence which drew me there, and I found I was fit to enter upon another state and reach into the scenes beyond. I was taken by the hand and led, accompanied by many thousands treading the same pathway, and as I was passing over the bridge towards the other side, there were countless hosts who mingled in the passage with me, and, as I gazed above, below and around,

Digitized by Google

glory seemed permeating everything. On approaching the middle I noticed a change in the atmosphere, which seemed to impede my further advance, and there occurred what may appear marvellous to you, for most of the throng sank into the mist which we had entered, and passed away to other attractions more potent than that which allured me.

Diverging from this glorious bridge were what appeared branches leading to different parts of the spheres. I took what seemed to be the centre or middle path, and, as I did so, strains of music suddenly burst upon me, of such a volume that it seemed like the music struck from ten thousand harps. To this enchanting music the water broke and rippled in perfect time and tune.

Hundreds of spirits whom I had not seen before now drew near to me, induced by influences of affinity and the laws of spiritual relationship. I saw those who were known by names which stood high on the earthly records many generations ago. These came near me and helped to bring me along the path. Simultaneously with their approach there surrounded me a refulgent light, essentially pure and beautiful, and friends came dressed in dazzling white, bearing in their hands suitable garments for me to wear in these grades. Higher we rose, and just as we stepped upon what seemed a silvery shore lined with all the precious stones imaginable, we heard notes innumerable of the most exquisite music wafted to us from the dim distance. Have you ever been out in the morning, when the beauties of Nature spring forth in the glowing light of the sun as he mounts in his golden car, when the animals gambol o'er the green, and the dew glistens on the flowers, whose perfume steals over the senses like the balmy winds of heaven? It is only by such a scene that I can picture to you the glory of this one. But behold it now purer and finer, with the music, not only of harps tuned to the nicest pitch, but that of thousands of birds, whose

Digitized by Google

melody sounded in the distance like chimes awakening and answering chimes many of your miles away! All this harmony burst with rapture on my ear; and although it made me tremble, yet it attracted me like a loadstone, making every nerve to vibrate far above your power to conceive.

Up, let us away! Here a circle of kind friends bear us on swiftly, and I sank into a slumber sweet and calm; and when I awoke it was on a beautiful sea shore. There were delightful villas around it, which were built in the Gothic style—similar to those I spoke of before. Seeing a venerable-looking sage, whose locks were of a silvery hue, and from whose eyes there issued a mellow kindness, I drew towards him, and thus did say: "Oh! you, who have trodden these scenes for such vast spaces of time, I hear the music from a thousand worlds, tell me, have I at last reached the top step that leads to those glorious worlds of which I have been told, and which have been pictured to me in such glowing colours?" He turned, and as he did so, a light shone on me that awoke within me a vision which seemed to foretell my spiritual destiny. He said: "Spirit, I possess no miraculous powers; the philosopher's stone I have not won; my only guide is Nature's laws, which, by Deity's aid, are so perfect; and He, having brought us into existence as well as others, has not made any stone or other peculiar substance by which you can reach ambition's fame. Fame is like the fire, or the smoke which quickly disappears, it leaves only the scant residue of that which it devoured. In these realms others will teach you, and you, in your turn, will impart to those beneath you in knowledge, for such is the law. Spirits dwell upon each other as men are dependent on each other upon earth below." "Ah!" quoth I, "that's good, indeed; but it is not the key I desire—it is not the key with which I can undo the lock, and thereby see the marvellous rock that all seems to be built upon." "Friend," he returned, "wisdom and know-

Digitized by Google

ledge you will gain by diligent enquiry. I will, however, tell you that this is the world where spirits of the lower spheres draw near to those who love them dearly. It is here where the spirit becomes ready for a new birth into the Summer Land beyond." "The Summer Land! What land is that?" I asked. "It is the land you reach from here by passing through a change which steals over you as death, but in a calmer manner." "What! I will not see death again?" I hastily interposed, and said: "I will tell you how I passed away from the earth I once lived upon. When Nature claimed her rights, and divided spirit from matter, I was what is termed unconscious—my senses being influenced by a stimulant which saturated my system." "Stop," said the sage, "you are measuring the spiritual death by the earthly crisis which you have passed through. This which you have to meet is only like a sleep—like parting with certain coatings which you cannot take with you after the second birth." "How many more have I to pass through?" I asked. "That I cannot tell," he replied, "for my knowledge and experience do not extend beyond this critical turn. But this I do know, that the highest state you can reach is said to be the seventh; so count, and then you will know how many you will have to pass through."

Here was a dilemma, I thought, and I felt that I would almost prefer to tarry where I was rather than risk the pangs I had to pass through ere entering into spirit-life. An idea of what I then felt I will convey to you as well as I can. Slumber wafted my senses into a sluggish state. Struggling sensations then seemed to seize all the vital parts of my body, owing to my having passed away when steeped in a state of intoxication. May such not be the case with any of you, and when the great change approaches, then you can meet it without flinching. There should be no such thing as fear, because nought can hurt the spirit. If you but knew the things I now know,

Digitized by Google

and the ease with which the spirit leaves the body, you would not feel the fear which many thousands do. I wish to impress mankind to believe that there is nothing painful in a healthy spirit leaving a healthy body, or one ripe for the change through natural decay.

After the sage had ceased speaking I asked the following question: "Will my spirit leave this spiritual body with which I am surrounded?" "Yes, friend, the same way as the seed leaves the flower—the same way as the moisture evaporates from the earth. Your spirit will then be finer—your soul will be clearer—your mind will be purer—the emblems of the spirit will become supremely beautiful." I was calmed by this, for I deemed that the attainment of such a state was akin to heaven; but not the ecclesiastical heaven of earth. No! that idea had been long expelled from my mind.

Heaven!—a term that is in every man's mouth. How little can he realise of such a subject! What a pity he should lack the necessary powers to picture the true heaven! Heaven is above you and below you—surrounding you and abounding in you! In everything you behold there is heaven! Beneath your feet you often trample it down. No books contain the laws of heaven. God's laws can only be obeyed by cultivating the moral faculties, and this is a precept you can read from the open volume of Nature, whose multiform pages are free to all. No laws have come from the Almighty but through His works. How canst thou, oh, vain priest, handle subjects of which thou art ignorant? What presumption!—worse than the peacock, as he struts and appears lost in admiration of himself, looking as if he thought he had descended from heaven! And it is a vain peacock, clothed in pride and presumption, that speaks of the laws of heaven in the irreverent and impious manner you do. The laws of Deity are simple, pure, and holy. All Nature abounds in laws of

Digitized by Google

Truth; but man, like the bird just mentioned, abounds in show and outward dressing. Down, pomp and ceremony! Down, show and feathers! and rear the simple images of Truth and Nature, which should adorn all thy works. Simply look to Nature, and bring thy being into a state of purity, and thou wilt reach a far healthier and purer condition than all the laws ever compiled by man could make thee. I shall now bid you good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XVII.

DELIVERED 16TH FEBRUARY, 1875.

TO-NIGHT, to-night, the joyful echoes sound above! tongues untold are loosed and as songsters sing! listen, as the distant sounds burst forth from the Spirit-land! not one, but countless voices sing! I hear them now, for their melody is wafted hither! they even seem to make your earth ring with a concord of sweet music past description.

Dark and cloudy may the road of life appear at times, yea, dark as night; but the bright morning will dawn, and heavenly light will come at last. There is one bright spot to cheer the most gloomy life—the vista of the hopeful future—one glimpse of which should banish all clouds from the human heart. Guileless is its beautiful path, leading the soul ever forward and upward. I hear again the union of a myriad voices intoning the music of the spheres, sounds far beyond the reach of earthly ears to hear. I hear the bards' poetic strains, which seem to tell of another journey to the earth below. I hear the music sounding forth, "'tis time you knew your state, for on that day when the clock of ages strikes, you will be launched on the voyage for eternity, to which you will be wafted or gently conducted by spirits of love." Thus the music seemed to say, and lo! I fancied myself floating into that grand and glorious state beyond.

That which I have seen and known I will try to impart to you as clearly as I can, not forgetting the strange music which seemed to wrap all in a mystic cloud, throwing a dense shadow around.

Digitized by Google

I hear the music once again! This time it seems to say, "Awake, man! thou shalt know there is a Deity whose love is over all." Nearer and nearer appear to come the choral host, striving to cheer the cold and gloomy heart, and resounding o'er earth's wide domain: "Falsity and prejudice must be trampled down, down, down! Awake! thou must no longer slumber! Up! 'tis time, time!" Countless voices thus ring out, and swell the choir celestial. Good-night.

Most of this evening's sitting was devoted to explanations by the lecturer of statements made in the previous lectures. A few minutes only of the allotted time for lecturing were available after these explanations had been given, hence the brevity of the utterances. —Ed.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XVIII.

DELIVERED 19TH FEBRUARY, 1875.

GOOD EVENING, FRIENDS. On the previous meeting we were unable to give you any manifestations* through the medium, the reason of which I will explain to you to-night (and I wish the explanation to be reported, so that strangers may become cognisant of the fact of our inability to cope with certain adverse circumstances which occasionally arise when we are endeavouring to communicate with those on earth). The medium for this form of communication being, so to say, a mere machine or mechanical contrivance, whose organism should be in perfect tone or harmony, to ensure the operator fulfilling what he or she would wish, and spirits being far from infallible, it follows that a discordant influence acting upon any part of that organism impairs, or totally defeats, our power to hold communion with you by such means. Adverse states of the atmosphere and the medium's health are the two chief opposing forces we have to contend with in our converse with you, neither of which states can we guard against; we cannot control the elements, nor can we alter the natural course of events. The mind of the medium, immediately prior to the last sitting, had been too much agitated to admit of its being controlled by us for discourse; and we can only express a hope that no recurrence of a similar nature will interfere to retard the delivery of the series of lectures for which we meet twice during your week. The brain of the

* On the last evening of meeting, owing to the disturbed state of the medium's mind from some little annoyance during the day, his spirit friends failed to entrance him.

Digitized by Google

Medium, for purposes of manifestations, should be like smooth water—clear and calm as a placid lake. If you cast a pebble or stone into water, you will perceive a disturbance occurs, preventing your sight from penetrating beyond the surface, until the ripples caused by the contact of the foreign influence have subsided. The brain and system of a Medium for spiritual communion should be as serene as the surface of a placid pond. If there be a rush of blood upon certain parts of the body, it immediately affects the whole system. Take, for instance, the child * over there in the corner who suffers from the toothache, the pain from which affects the whole body. Directly one organ is opposed or depressed it operates upon the others, and it is impossible at such times to use these Mediums as we would wish to use them, for, under the most favourable circumstances, half of the matter we intend passing through them is lost; and if we only succeed in conveying to your minds our ideas clothed, for the most part, in the language of those through whom we pass them, we deem ourselves repaid for the trouble. To convey our sentiments to you unadulterated is a consummation fervently desired by us: but rarely is such a result attained. How is this to be avoided? It cannot be. Nature cannot be made to belie herself; she is immovable, and cannot alter. We are controlled by Nature the same as yourselves.

---

* Indicating a daughter of the Editor who was present this evening, and who was suffering from toothache; and in connection with whom a pleasing incident occurred at the conclusion of the lecture, for she was requested, in the familiar tones of Amelia Evans—a spirit who controlled Harris for therapeutic purposes—to advance and seat herself before the medium, which request having been complied with, the spirit, through the medium, demagnetised and magnetised respectively, in a most graceful manner, the head of the patient, who declared, after a few passes had been made, that the pain from the tooth had vanished!

Digitized by Google

At the termination of my last discourse I left you on the border of what may be termed the centre-sphere—for such is the position of the Fourth Sphere.

Those who have not studied this subject will, perhaps, find it difficult to comprehend. But it is not difficult to understand that at some future day every man and woman must pass away from this earth. That is to say, they will be made to part with their physical body, and a new birth will take place.

It is to this centre-sphere where the spirits are brought preparatory to the second death, or, rather, say the second transformation, for the spiritual body, having discarded the unworthy influences that were around it in the previous sphere, is now fitted for a higher state. It may be asked, how can this possibly be? Many have said that when once the spirit takes its flight from the body, all pains and sorrows are o'er—that it is borne away and rises to a land of perpetual bliss, where sorrows never more will move it; and having reached that state, they consider the summit of progress will have been attained, that the laws of Nature are then suspended, and the spirit is instantaneously fitted to enter into the presence of the Supreme Father, or Deity!

Yes, this is the teaching, but let us more carefully examine the facts. And I wish to impress upon your minds that, unless you have attentively followed me in my progress hitherward, you cannot understand what I am about to tell you here, viz., that this is the last sphere attained by the spirit ere it is placed in a state to be borne to what is termed the "Summer Land," for between the Summer Land and the spheres below there is a vast difference, so vast that it would be as easy for you to reach one of the other planets in your bodily form as for a spirit to attain to the Summer Land who is unfitted to enter it! It is here, in this central sphere, where the spirit must lose all the evil passions and inclinations

Digitized by Google

which influenced it in the lower spheres. In this transitionary sphere there are not the different and conflicting sects by which the under spheres are characterised, for here all religious creeds, all old superstitious teachings, are levelled to the ground. The spirit before entering this sphere must have a certain power over the organical structure of its being, and have extirpated the cravings and passions of earth. 'Tis in this sphere that the principle of affinity is begun to be realised in its true essence. There are no scattered or different tribes, clans or bands here, all are on a par, that is to say, a par of preparation for a higher sphere—the Summer Land!

It is with rapidity the spirit comprehends its position when placed here, where it finds there is no idle time. It now perceives that what it had hitherto considered so beautiful has become dwarfed in insignificance, so to speak, compared to the glories around and awaiting its advent to more advanced states, that the past scenes, although associated with transcendent beauties, are as it were a mere speck compared to the vast expanse that lies beyond. The sun rises and breaks through the clouds, and the great mystery unfolds itself to the spiritual faculties. It is here, upon this very stepping-stone, that the spirit learns that what it has heretofore seen has been but a mere nothing to that which is beyond. There is no man, probably, who, believing in a future existence, does not imagine or paint it in the brightest colours. He pictures it to himself in no small degree of grandeur. Even the prophets and patriarchs of old, although they cherished great and glorious ideas concerning it, did not fall into the right way of thinking, viz., that of passing through *a gradation of spheres*, each one brighter than the other. Such a rational arrangement was ill suited to their ideal and erroneous conceptions. Each generation has decked the future state in the old pomp of their forefathers' ideas, who reared it up on a basis of ignorance and superstition.

Digitized by Google

Ne'er has been a time in history when so deep and fervent an inquiry has been made regarding the destiny of the race as is now taking place upon earth. Thousands will tell you that they belong to this or that denomination, that they are "true and holy Catholics," "devout Protestants," &c., but I perceive many, very many, within the so-called pale of the Church who are faltering. The real crystal waters of truth have been long dammed up; man in his ignorance has prevented their being poured down to refresh the drooping spirits of those who thirsted for them.

Yes, "holy Catholics," and "devout Protestants." You have called upon Deity through Mary or Jesus, but how many will the latter know of you in the sense that you expect? You have yet to learn that he knows none of you in the manner you seem to anticipate. It is by certain ways and means—the knowledge of which is easily gained—that you can alone cleanse yourselves. No intercessor is needed, as you have been falsely taught, for you have to rely solely upon yourselves. Listen, earthly beings! in the arched vault among countless orbs, each world appearing in the vast distance as merely a little twinkling star, seemingly placed there as diamonds to adorn His Works, unnumbered, unseen worlds abound, unceasingly revolving in their appointed orbits.

Myriads there are in spirit-life who rejoice that they have found those whom they ignorantly had supposed were lost. They no longer mourn with tears those whom they had unwittingly consigned to those mythical localities—the main props of the various churches. Of "Hell" and "Heaven's" existence nothing dost thou know, poor, benighted, ignorant, man. In thy Father's kingdom there are many mansions, however, which thou knowest not of. Who gave thee power, presumptuous man, to divide the signs and quarter them? Who gave thee sanction to halve, or rather apportion His realms as thou hast done to suit thy personal interest? Who

Digitized by Google

gave thee that power? Speak! you that have lived so long upon the running stream of pretension, which is slowly, but surely, becoming exhausted before the advance of that philosophy upon which you have attempted to cast disgrace. There are some of you who would have welcomed it with open arms if it could have entered into a compromise with your man-made creeds, as if truth could or would descend to demean itself. It stands, however, upon a foundation that you cannot shake or touch. Let me further ask: Canst thou tell where those are gone who once did grasp you with friendly hand, who once did see with flashing eye? Whither have they sped their solitary way? Oh! hurl back the stone, and let your religion answer the question. Blank, indeed, is thine answer, thou cans't not tell, ye holy priests of pretension and ancient superstition. Through thy false teaching, and the impious power so long at thy command (which, happily, is slipping from thine hands) men have languished through an indefinite period of time, but now they are beginning to drink of the golden waters pouring down upon their thirsty souls, bringing them hand-in-hand with those they loved, who have only entered a higher domain of Nature where they still live and love though existing in changed forms of matter.

To return to our subject, viz., the preparatory sphere for the second transformation. Everything here is work, each spirit is studying to fit itself for the higher land, to which they are conducted by what are termed white-robed spirits, who are beautiful to behold though robed in perfect simplicity. The dress that is generally worn is of an olden fashion or stamp. It is merely a sort of beautiful muslin, lightly and loosely clothing the form, and braced in at the waist by a girdle or belt, upon which are written certain emblems, such as Truth, Love, Simplicity. You smile, but such means are employed to bring those whom they conduct into harmony with their neighbours.

Digitized by Google

The idea of books in the future life will, by many, perhaps, be looked upon as absurd, but the contents of books are supplemental to the teachings of the higher spirits. Many, very many, who leave this earth and the lower spiritual sphere have never been enabled to read books, but they are eventually taught to do so.

I noticed that those whom I saw in this grade appeared to look as if they were advancing in years. The youngest here seemed to be spiritually older than the eldest I had left behind.

I spoke, and these are the words as far as I can remember: —"Noble elders, I greet you! I, ignorant as ignorant can be, have travelled far, but I suppose you have traversed the same space before me. Can you say how thus you all seem to be growing older? Can you to me the secret unfold and give me light, that I may back to earth and convey the tidings of the revealed mystery?" One, with beautiful blue eyes, and with a halo dazzling and sparkling around his face, whose beauty I could not help admiring, thus returned:—"Strangers, for I see many such are here, 'tis here where the final education for the Summer Land is commenced. I have passed through the grades and spheres which you have traversed. I have also seen others that I cannot in any way picture to you or enlighten you upon, you must see for yourselves. Upon this very ground where I stand, and around and about once dwelt certain spirits who lived upon earth far back in time. You cannot but have admired the scenes which you have witnessed, but those which you will yet see are beyond description, they are past even your imagination. It is in this sphere, within whose portals you have just now stepped, that you have to learn to throw behind and away from you those old dispositions which formed part of your earthly nature. Here, friends, must you awake to THE GRAND REALITY before you can take your flight to the Summer Land with its silvery shores. Even that has

Digitized by Google

to be passed, but ere you do so a great deal has to be learned; the future with its golden light will be ever beckoning you forward. You must here become, by the laws of affinity, in perfect harmony with all whom you meet. Behold! I see some of you even now whose faculties grow larger and expand. By such a growth and expansion if continued you will attain to true harmony with each other and all the spirits of the same sphere, so that you will be enabled to feel when you pass into the land of perfect harmony that you are without one spot, without one blemish, without one flaw, standing forth in your naked simplicity, pure, good, true and holy, knowing and comprehending the laws that govern you; your whole spiritual form can be looked upon, and none can then say there is one blot, one stain, but that all is lovely as in the Summer Land." I will now draw the lecture to a close.

(The following was here spoken through the medium, still entranced, in tones of voice similar to those of a child):—

List, oh! list to the music. Hark, oh! hark to its chords, which strike in unison with the choirs above. Oh! listen to the silvery fountains beaming with light as they softly play. Away, away! oh! let us away to those who are joyous and happy, who have no cares to mar their spiritual life. Away to the lands of those bright and glorious spirits! See what perfect love is reigning there, blending them soul to soul so that nought can sever them. Up then, up and away through the deep blue sky and o'er the realms of light to the regions far above.

Canst thou not conceive that those pure and joyous beings have merely gone before to brighten up thy dark and dreary days? Oh! list while I tell you there are countless numbers there from lands of which you cannot tell, nor can you know until lifted up and away into those realms of bliss.

Digitized by Google

Then awake! and ne'er go back to the weary track. Keep up your spirit and body too, and live while you can upon earth, doing and saying nought but what is good and true. Seek and encourage the loving ones who surround you waiting to be of service to you. From them knowledge you will gain to guide you here and to bring with you to the spirit-world. Good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XIX.

DELIVERED 26TH FEBRUARY, 1875.

GOOD EVENING. To-night I shall have the pleasure of passing my communications through a brain which is in a more serene state for the continuation of these lectures than it was on the previous occasion of our meeting.

In my last discourse I briefly alluded to the fact of books being media for instructing spirits in some of the spheres, and I now proceed to an examination of the old books or manuscripts, which you, perhaps, would designate as documents or parchments, though they are in a different sort of printing to that in use among yourselves. The characters within the covers of these books being emblematic—an art of conveying sentiments in the form of picturing—directly a spirit casts his eye over the pages, he is enabled to grasp the ideas they convey. He requires no preliminary study to qualify him for the task, other than the attainment of a certain developed moral state, co-existent with which is the acquisition of the powers of clairvoyance, fitting the spirit to comprehend any subject within these hieroglyphical volumes, and to grasp the meaning instantly.

I was led to what might be termed a library of great magnitude. Its length, at first view, seemed disproportioned to its width; but an inspection of the interior arrangements reconciled one immediately to the apparent want of symmetry in the building. Upon rows and tiers of shelves were books of every sort and description. To enter the place I must need lead you through a small, but neat, garden diversified with flowers which looked very beautiful. 'Twas a richly cultiva-

Digitized by Google

ted spot, and guarded by a light crystal-like fencing or palisading. The steps from the garden leading to the building were constructed with what appeared bright blue coloured marble, and there were statues placed around the walks, which were evidently all chiselled by the same masterly hand; so life-like were these statues, that as they were looked upon, the gazer almost fancied that intelligence sparkled from their eyes, and that their whole forms were animated.

I was taken up to two doors which were opened for our admission, and I was allowed free inspection of the interior. Those whom I saw there appeared to be scrutinizing very earnestly the contents of the various books from which they were seeking the special knowledge which they desired to obtain. The precision and order of the arrangements were admirable. There was no noise, all was perfect quietness. In a certain division, or part of the library where I supposed the most valued and cherished volumes were kept, attendants were stationed, who watched over the treasures which they were commissioned to guard. There was no carelessness shown by those to whom books were given, but they were used with a care, and looked at with an earnestness beyond my power of describing to you. The nearest possible way I can convey to you an idea of the respect and affection manifested by these students for the books they were perusing, is to call your attention to a young child who has been presented with its first pictorial rudimentary book, the possession of which imparts to the infantile countenance a glowing smile and sparkling thrill of life, animating, to the extreme, the whole frame, and showing by the quickened pulsation, the genuine pleasure the child feels. So with these spirits; their whole souls were entranced by the perusal of these manuscripts. It seemed to be no meagre information that was gained from these books, for a keen observation assured me they were replete with instruction. On the shelves were the records of tens of thousands of your

Digitized by Google

years. "That is a riddle," say you, "unfold it." To those who do not realise what I have stated, I say that upon those shelves lie books which, although not cased in mouldy coverings, or possessing crumbling leaves, yet bear on their pages the story of the world's development. Upon those covers was engraven a name that excited the faculties of the students, and spurred them on to acquire the information which those pages contained. Knowledge was to be gained therefrom without racking the threads of nature within the system. As I looked upon those books, imagination conjured up the forms of those who had passed away from earth thousands of years agone. Here was collected information dating back almost to an infinitude of time.

Those studious spirits who wished it were allowed to take the volumes they required to pursue their studies, without the building; and those who did, glided along in stately order, carrying their treasures, and looking upon them with the most intense interest and tender care. No words—no noise—not a syllable was spoken. And as I passed along I thought, here have I found at last a description of Nature's works, opened out in pages which I can understand, and I will see if, by tracing back and glancing over these ancient manuscripts, I can find information which will enlighten the world which I first trod; if so, I will bide my time and convey tidings to all. I looked upon an old volume, and then said to him in charge who stood by: "It seems many ages of time since that book has been disturbed; it appears as if it had been passed by all without having been taken down. Now wilt thou lend me this rejected yet precious-looking book?" These are the words in which he addressed me: "That book is one that has not been disturbed for long. Ah! I see by the twinkle of your eye that you are upon the alert to secure it. Well, take it, but be careful of it. He that left it behind upon that shelf has departed for higher realms. The compilation of that

Digitized by Google

work occupied centuries of time. Be careful and return it uninjured." I passed out with the book in my arms. A sort of trembling thrilled through me. I knew it was because of the treasure in my possession; but why I should feel this peculiar sensation I could not tell. I seemed at once connected with higher sources, and linked by a feeling of affinity which I cannot describe to you. I resolved to retire to the quietest nook to be found, and there revel in its sacred pages, read the oracles of the past, lift the coffin-lids away from those who were dead to earthly view, and see the marks that they had left behind for the benefit of those who should come after them.

Away I sped to the distant hills which I saw towering in the east, beautiful trees adorning them to their summits, for I thought that when I reached them they would afford a quiet resting-place for my purpose. Often when upon earth I was in the habit of wandering in the wild woods to hear the music of the birds, and the ripple of the mountain stream as it careered over rocks or pebbles, on its passage to the ocean. Such scenes were at times necessary to my life. I loved to walk among the ripening corn, and beside the meandering streams, whose waters danced and sparkled in the sun's bright rays. I loved to pass the mellow eves in those sylvan spots, with the quiet moonbeams smiling in the placid lake, and when I sauntered among these delightful scenes of my earthly days they seemed to connect me with the land of brightness and glory which I have since reached, where everything seems to flash in crystal brilliancy, and sparkle with the brightness of the diamond.

It was among those scenes of earth that I gained my knowledge of Nature. It was there among the rugged paths of towering mountains, where the quiet was only broken by the sighing of the wind in its vibrating passage onwards. It was there that I felt most powerfully those influences which enabled

Digitized by Google

me to mount the ladder of fame. I always noticed that in those quiet scenes my spirit became gentle and passive, and filled with love and adoration for my Maker. My fancy would take flight above the world on which I dwelt, soaring among the glorious stars far away, where it would revel in thoughts of another and brighter day.

Now, in a few brief words, I will draw your attention to the scenery that was before and around me when I arrived at the end of my journey to those distant hills in the east; there all was quiet and peaceful, the birds softly and gracefully winged their flight, the foliage of the trees was gently agitated by an impulse that was beautiful. As I cast my vision beyond, there I saw the undulating mountains towering high in seeming rivalry one with another, yet with no uncouth grandeur, no roughness in their outlines, but decked in the most elaborately arranged colours you can possibly picture. In my passage along, I drew near to a place rather thickly studded with beautifully umbrageous trees, one of which, standing a little apart from the others, spread out its fantastic, but graceful, looking limbs as if inviting me under them for shelter and protection. Beneath this tree I seated myself, and immediately there dawned upon me an increased light, and I saw that which I will attempt to describe to you; but any picture which I can possibly place before you will convey but a poor—very poor idea of the reality of that scene. I had witnessed different rays and shades of light; I had seen, as I thought, every description of spirits in all attires and all sorts of fashion; but now, what did I see? I beheld him who was the author of the book that I had just placed beside me. Upon his brow was a crown; but it was a crown of virtue, and not one composed of any so-called precious substance; and from his head to his feet there proceeded those gorgeous magnetic lights which I have before described. I could see through him, as you can see through the most transparent glass. I

Digitized by Google

could read his very thoughts, and he spoke to me without having recourse to words, or to the organs from whence speech generally issues. These were the sentiments he conveyed to me: "In that book, whose pages are covered with no fantastic designs or glittering inscriptions, unadorned with clasp of gilt or gold, I, ages ago, did trace my ideas concerning the earth that once I lived on, and where once you also trod; and on some of whose pages, friend, you will find expositions of philosophy, rules of existence, the mechanical arts, and many things relating to those orbs which you now see, and to those worlds which you saw from the globe you have passed away from. Peruse it carefully, for you, not being so far developed as its author, require such study. I perceive with pleasure that your faculties are thirsting for that knowledge which by-and-bye you will attain. If your spiritual soul I read aright, it is not mere curiosity that prompts you, but it is the acquisition of knowledge of which you are covetous, no small portion of which you can imbibe from that volume that will enable you to cast the seed to man on earth, from the first of whom (as recorded in one of the most ancient books there extant, whose records are implicitly believed in by many whose reason is subordinate to their faith), the manufacturing Hand of Deity produced a companion for the solitary sojourner —thus creating two from one—placing them in a garden called Paradise, whose gates were locked with golden locks, whose fruit did ripen as their food; but, like all earthly things, they lived only to pass away, leaving a deathless curse on all their descendants. In that book beside you, you will read a very different description of the manner in which the globe called earth was brought to the perfection in which you left it. From its pages, too, you will glean intelligence descriptive of some of the other worlds termed stars. Unfold its pages, friend. And now I will bid you adieu. Some other time—when you have deeply studied this book—I will return to

Digitized by Google

you." On saying which he passed from my sight—the vision was gone! It was a scene that flashed before me like a transient spark! I took the book, and there read in hieroglyphics to this intent: "Creation was ne'er brought about by quick, impulsive means, but slowly and gradually by the laws of attraction and gravity. The thousands of stars which traverse the mighty orbits assigned them, and which manifest the glory of their Creator, originated from the smallest atomic particles the human mind can imagine. The earth has been in course of progress during countless ages, and is, and ever will be, on the plane of progress. Not a year, not a day, passes but some particles are attracted and joined to it. After having passed through many varied changes by the action of intense internal fires, by the condensation of the surrounding atmosphere, by the decomposition of the rocks, by the displacement of the various strata, &c., a form of vegetation sprang up as a natural result; and from this simple formation sprang more complex and higher orders of beauty— the fish, reptiles, birds and animals springing into existence and developing in like order to the vegetation—a necessarily slow and gradual evolution from the lowest to the highest taking place in all. The human family, the ultimate of physical creation, did not proceed from one man, who could not be the father of the race any more than one oak-tree, however gigantic — however high aloft it rears its head—could have been the progenitor of all the trees of the world. Men of different colours and subdivisions, as well as the various animals, could ne'er have been brought into existence by such means, but each species was developed by a protoplastic process, and in its own natural clime. Take a Hindoo from his country and place him in one of the frigid zones of the earth, and his form will soon begin to weaken, and he will eventually pass away. Transfer an individual from a frigid to a torrid zone, and his body will gradually wither under the fervent heat. Their

Digitized by Google

organisations are unable to withstand the change for any lengthened period."

Oh! sombre and dismal shadows of the past, begone! Avaunt! the mists that crowd about thee; be thou no longer dumb, but speak that man can understand thee. Tis time that those creative powers of imagination implanted in man should have become sufficiently developed to enable his faculties to grasp and understand the idea of mind springing from the flower or plant. He will not allow the animals to possess, in an unfolding state, those faculties of which he is so proud. Behold the bee! note its actions, and it will be perceived what intelligence and mind are displayed by that little insect. A great deal of the beauty around and about him, and in the sky above him is disregarded by the head of the animal creation. Man was brought into the world in an undeveloped state, and having gained his present lofty position he looks down with disdain upon the lower forms of life from which he originated. Behold the ant! the smallest thing I can bring before your mind; behold them crawling along the ground: there is a nation there; each individual possessing language, instinct, and almost the cunning of yourselves. Every animal has a language, and there are some which interchange thoughts among themselves almost as profound as your own. Then why should man assume such a supercilious stand, and depreciate all that is subordinate to him? There is not a thing upon the earth that is met with in one's path through life, but what was placed there by the Great Creator's power. Man works by a haughty and arrogant rule, and places himself outside every other animated thing, merely because he walks erect, and can exercise his mind in a more definite manner than the animals beneath him; but let me tell him that there is truth in those creatures despised by him. The life that is within the ant, the dog, the horse, and other animals, possesses power and faculties that will be transmitted to all eternity. They will be repro-

Digitized by Google

duced upon earth until they eventuate in other and more sublime forms—while man progresses in the spirit-world—and they will hereafter enter upon a new existence. Thus progression is universal and eternal.

Thus contemplating, the following thoughts flowed into my mind :—Have I been here so long and not learned this? I, who pictured many wondrous things when upon earth, not to understand the great law of evolution. It seems to work, as do all the other laws of Nature, by a process, slow but sure and precise, never deviating, but adhering to the inevitable groove leading to higher and higher stages of existence. It was not only on earth that I had been influenced by the false teaching of centuries, but I had come in contact with something similar since passing away, for in my earlier spiritual existence I had met with many instances where the same malignant influences had retained their tenacious hold, but here I found that naught can pass away, and that every form of life is destined eventually for a higher sphere, ever rising towards the Source to which it owes its being.

The subject pertaining to the evolutionary process of the earth did not take me wholly by surprise, for I had long discarded the old preposterous doctrine of the hebdomadary period of time as assigned for the blending together of this globe The advance of the science of geology dissipates this absurd doctrine, and every rational being, if he but exercise his reason aright, and looks into, reads, and understands this subject as Nature presents it, will not fail to perceive the stupid and pernicious fable, as promulgated by a religion embracing many of the most advanced minds upon earth. The truth is palpable, and makes itself known if you view—as I oft did—any circumscribed portion of earth's domain. The thought frequently arose in my youthful days on earth, "How could such a world as this be made in so few days—in such a brief space of time?" But *now* a different story is told, viz.,

Digitized by Google

that each "day" represents a period of time of indefinite length. Time, indeed, works wondrous changes.

It has also been taught that man, though blessed with the divine faculty of reason, must allow the best portion of his nature to slumber. What a stigma to cast upon Deity, who has endowed man with faculties for USE. Arise, and be like the bee: forget the past, the future is your own; try and redeem that which is lost; stop not on the brink of the well looking down, for that will never tell you of the secrets which lie below; you must sound and reach the bottom, the secrets of which are then your own, for you have gained them by research, a continuance in which will raise you out of the sphere of mere animal nature, and impart to you all the dignity of an immortal, whose eternally unfolding destiny will necessarily partake of the qualities of your endlessly unfolding aspirations.

(Invocation). Oh! vast and illimitable Power! Whose mountains tower to an interminable height: how great and noble art Thou! We cannot but admire and revere Thee. Thy handiwork is as apparent upon the smallest animal as it is upon man, whom Thou hast brought to the state he now enjoys—a state in which he is too apt to overlook that from which he sprang. Oh! Thou great and glorious Being! Whose spiritual powers permeate Thy immeasurable Universe! Whose glory surrounds the whole of Thy mighty kingdoms! We look to Thee and regard Thee as our Father; for Thou hast taught us that in loving Thee we mentally come nearer those attributes which are Thy characteristics. The very hills seem to echo forth Thy praise in notes that create an impress upon all. The very waves that seem to undulate from the east to join those of the west, send a melody up to Thee. From thy boundless Domains music is ever ascending to Thee in one vast circle, proclaiming Thy glorious liberality! Thy unbounded and impartial love surrounds and envelops us Oh! Deity; Thou glorious Love

Digitized by Google

of all loves! Thou Eternity of eternities! Thou World of worlds! Thou Truth of truths! Thy works can ne'er belie Thee! We, in our uncouth state, and in our narrow minds, and small perceptions, have fallen far short of conceiving Thy great and mighty powers! How glorious to know that Thy Love abounds for other beings as well as for us. Let Thy wings shelter those on earth as they have sheltered us. Grant that the steps we have trod, and which these are to tread after us, may be made more smooth and calm—more placid by the knowledge which Thou hast permitted us to bring to them. Those in the flesh who worship Thee, do so in accord with their carnal surroundings; divested of which the spirit has a purer conception of Thee. Oh! Father of Love and Truth! we ask Thee to enable us to lift our faculties higher, and those of others too, that our souls may be blended with Thee. Forgive the past weakness of the flesh, and aid our spirits to rise supreme over all difficulties. Enable us all in every new birth to rise active and earnest in the all-impelling desire to progress towards that sphere where Thy glory and power, Thy love and wisdom, are most manifest. Good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XX.

DELIVERED 2ND MARCH, 1875.

GOOD EVENING. In my last discourse I spoke to you of the formation of this earth through the accumulation of atoms or particles. To-night I shall make a brief sketch of this planet, and also allude to other worlds; and I will try to show those who choose to give their consideration to the subject that your modern discoveries in geology corroborate in a measure my assertions, and also other statements that I have previously uttered through the medium anent the same subject. These discoveries have gone far to demonstrate what the earth is composed of, and also to indicate the duration of time which elapsed ere it attained the perfection or state of development which it now presents. The hills, the valleys, the seas, all point to the vanguard of progress still steadily expanding this globe. Those who study the science of geology, and contemplate the formation of the earth, reviewing the discoveries that have been made in its strata, and of the fossils of extinct animals found therein, will become thoroughly convinced that an immensity of time must have passed since the consolidation of even the most recent stratum of the earth, to say nothing of the oldest which man has been enabled to examine, for bear in mind that the ingenuity of man has as yet been unable to penetrate beyond a certain depth of the earth, which is not many thousands of feet from the surface; and from that stratum to the nucleus all is mystery to him.

It is said by many that the discoveries of geology clash with the religious convictions in which they have been indoctrinated. 'Tis true—I grant it, for the secrets that

Digitized by Google

remain untold to him I, with my eyes, have seen; and no man who is blessed with the noblest gift which God has bestowed on his creatures, viz., reason, can, if animated by the love of truth, think of the revelations of that science without the darkening impressions caused by the bandages of prejudice being dispelled. I have long cherished the conviction that reason is the most sublime gift bestowed by Deity upon man. It is the key that is destined to unlock the chains of prejudice, ignorance, and bigotry. Many who have held, but have not utilised that key in the past have, in spirit life, been compelled by the inflexible laws of retribution, to use their utmost endeavours to cleanse the rust from civilisation, whose progress they did so much, when upon earth, to retard.

Sometimes when I am endued with flashing sparks of light, an irresistible desire impels me to convey to mankind those things which have enlightened my intellect since I left the mundane plane of life, and, by the aid of the lofty thoughts which now animate me, to lift them up and away from the mere earthly accumulations which have gathered around them that they might enjoy one slight glimpse through the opening clouds of the glories beyond. But, alas! the power is unequal to the will. I am restrained by an obstacle which there is every promise of being surmounted in time. I refer to our present system of communicating with you, which imposes restrictions that are to a certain extent irksome and unsatisfactory, but which will eventually be overcome, when our intercourse will be freed from the trammels that now are so arbitrarily restrictive.

The bottom of the sea, let me tell you, is as undulating in places as portions of the dry land; there are valleys as deep and mountains as high as can be seen in the interior of your so-called continent. At the lowest depths of the ocean there are worlds of various classes of life. There are mysteries there which so far, have defied the cunningness of man to discover.

Digitized by Google

By his ingenuity, however, he has been enabled to form a slight conception of those watery deeps, which are beyond his physical sight. In corroboration of my testimony I have but to refer you to that of the more advanced philosophers of the day who have studied the subject of the formation of the earth they tread. A thought or opinion based upon truth should indelibly impress the mind prepared to receive it. But those whose bigotry, religious or scientific, causes them to dispute or reject palpable truths will not allow those blessed lights to shine, which have been given them to enable them to peer through the otherwise hidden mysteries. A time, however, is coming—is close at hand—when scepticism in regard to the spiritual gifts of clairvoyance and psychometry will be with them a thing of the past; when those truths, which they now treat with such disdain *must be* (for there is no alternative), received and respected by them. Many there are who have given a reluctant attention to the momentous truths we seek to impart; but few, indeed, are they who listen with that attention which the importance of the subject demands; few there are comparatively on earth who believe and have been accepted as fellow-workers—as yet the great majority have stubbornly rejected the golden opportunity of consolidating the keystone of a vast and mighty structure which is destined eventually to o'erarch the whole human family.

I shall now advert to another portion of the subject. Can you imagine what the thoughts of the bold navigator were who discovered the great western continent of the northern hemisphere? Doubtless when he was slowly sailing westward in one of the ill-shapen ships of those days, his ideas concerning the "world" which he was so sanguine of discovering, differed essentially from what he knew of that from which he had sailed. For was he not bent upon finding out a "new world?"—a world which he—enlightened as he was—compared to his contemporaries—deemed the antithesis of the so-called

Digitized by Google

"old world." The estimate of that adventurous and enlightened navigator—for such he is entitled to be called notwithstanding his erroneous conception—is somewhat akin to the estimate entertained of the other world, apart from this sphere, by those who have been cradled in the fanciful belief of winged spirits, the supposed occupants of such. These ornithological nondescript beings are supposed to be located, when they are not flapping their wings in flight, hither and thither, in some novel and utopian corner of the Universe, yet undiscovered by any spirit with whom I am acquainted. I say to those who cherish the preposterous hypothesis of a heaven to please the sensuous eye, to feed the appetite for ease and comfort, that there is a more rational and natural heaven than man's weak imaginations have painted, a heaven whose wingless denizens traverse space with a rapidity inconceivable, never imagined by you in connection with the hypothetical beings with fowl-like appendages.

And further, think not that the sole duty of the immortal spirit is that of praying to and praising its Creator in a *vocal* manner. No! The purified spirit is continually offering adoration to the Most High by the performance of its loving labours, a continuance of which gradually brings it nearer, not in space but in goodness, to its Divine Author! 'Tis a glorious life, indeed, upon which the immortal spirit enters when freed from its earthly scaffolding.

To those who doubt it, I again asseverate that there are other worlds in space which even the most powerful of your telescopes do not reveal, and upon each orb which reflects a light there is life, for where there is light there are eyes to make use of it; where there is atmosphere, there are living beings to utilise it. If you judge even by analogy alone, those orbs whose atmosphere seems to enclose them in a sort of halo (which indicates or represents a spiritual existence) are surely peopled by sentient beings. It has been granted by the most

Digitized by Google

sensible of learned men, who have given their serious attention to the subject, that every orb which the telescope has brought within view is surrounded by that halo, which is mainly caused by the flashing rays of light proceeding from the central luminary of each system of worlds.

Progressive changes, as I have had occasion to say before, are incessantly at work upon your earth, and the same is the case with all other worlds or planets. Around this, your Australian coast, the land is principally rising—a change effected by the mighty ocean, whose waters are increasing in their movements. The impetuous and awe-inspiring earthquakes, too, proceeding from the nucleus or foundations of the earth perform their part in the system of transformation, upraising masses that were previously concealed from the eye of man and depressing others that were elevated. The achievements of Progression are so prominent and perpetual that none can doubt, none can dispute, this well-established fact.

It is asserted by many that the soul of that being designated as an ignorant "savage" is subject to annihilation when death intervenes to suspend life in the physical body. But I emphatically maintain that the darkest savage that lives untouched by civilisation, ignorant of the power by which he is animated, yet is endowed with a latent intelligence; and though his characteristics be almost on a par with the lower forms of life, he possesses that which ne'er can be eradicated—ne'er can be extinguished; for Immortality is engraven within him, and can never be stamped out of his soul! If it were otherwise all would be night to him—day there would be none. But the day—the bright, refulgent day—is sure to dawn even upon him who is now so uncouth. There are none in the guise of humanity who are so dark and dreary but what the transcending light of glorious immortality was conferred upon them by an All-Loving and All-Seeing God!

Digitized by Google

Of the precise time in the development of man when the soul was engrafted within him neither I, nor any other created spirit, can determine; it is a mystery to all, except to the uncreate, self-existent, and infinite Spirit, who is unity as comprehending all, yet multiform as being in all. I can only speak on the subject of the immortality of the soul on the authority of what I have read since I entered spirit-life, and from the information I have gained from more advanced spirits who have made the subject their study. I have not the power to trace back to the period when man first appeared upon the earth, but from ancient writings, traditions, and from the book of Nature chiefly, I am impressed with the conviction that man was developed from the lower forms of life; that there was a period—a very prolonged period—when he was void of the immortal spark, even after he had begun to assume the human form. When, how, and in what manner that subtle and sublime essence was infused into man, is known to Him alone Who established and perfected the laws by which the change from mortality to immortality took place.

You must not imagine or understand the soul of man to be a thing of material brightness, as a sparkling gem, which it is, figuratively speaking. Rather endeavour to conceive the soul to be represented by an eternal movement of life, and think of it as a concentrated infinitesimal part of that ever-present divine Energy manifest in everything endowed with motion. Man, from the animals, gradually drew to himself higher powers, until the laws of affinity (mark these words) had so gathered all the essential substances together that the form was made perfect for the reception of the Divine spark. "Why should not man have been ready fashioned from the first for the reception of his soul?" it may be asked. "Because," I return, "Nature's laws, which are God's, work from the germ to the perfect development. Though God is infinite He does

Digitized by Google

not anticipate or act in advance of His laws, neither does He contravene them, for if He did, of what utility would they be? As the congelation of water by intense cold changes its condition, and enables you to skate upon its surface, as the seed when planted in due time germinates and develops into foliage and afterwards into the flower, so man, through a protractive series of advances, drew together by the inherent force within him the necessary requisites to attract the Divine spark, which, having once been received, made him an immortal —an imperishable being. Good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XXI.

DELIVERED 9TH MARCH, 1875.

GOOD EVENING, FRIENDS! My discourse to-night will touch lightly upon the subjects of Language, Instinct and Knowledge, and I will again quote from the book to which I have made reference previously. It was from the pages of this book that I gained a true conception of instinct. Their perusal conveyed to me a better knowledge of Nature's laws than I had hitherto obtained. From them I learned to better understand and appreciate the principle on which are based the wondrous Works of God. It was from this book that much information was derived which has been impressed upon the scientific minds of earth, who, by such impressions, have been enabled to raise the dark curtains that have shrouded many natural events, for in the past thousands of minds quite unconscious of it, (until "The Great Hereafter" has revealed the fact to them) have had ideas infused into them by loving spirits who once trod the earth as men and women.

Of the origin of languages there have been many accounts and surmises. Theologians have promulgated the doctrine that it came in the form of a plague direct from God to confound the presumption of a few thousands of mortals who wished to avoid the fate that is said to have befallen their predecessors, except a very limited number who were rescued in that specimen of naval architecture, termed the Ark, which bore them up on the surface of the waters while the rest of earth's people were submerged. In that book, or set of books, for which special divine inspiration is claimed, it is related that the descendents of this rescued family set to work to

Digitized by Google

build a castle or tower that would reach to heaven, or as some have interpreted it, *above high-water mark*, but that their impious undertaking was abruptly terminated by the Almighty afflicting them with a pestilence of manifold speeches! What a fable! What a childish hypothesis! What a gigantic absurdity! For epithets to depict it in its true colours—to speak in condemnatory terms of it—language is inadequate. The time that this babel of languages is said to have originated is very remote (comparatively speaking), and so many generations have succeeded those Babelonians, during which the only method of transmitting their records was by oral tradition, that the evidences in favour of such an origin of languages are very feeble, so much so as to be totally unworthy of credence by all who are blessed with common sense. Such a theory will not stand for a moment the searching criticism of intellect or reason. It falls far short of accounting for the origin of the multifarious modes of speech abounding upon the earth. What small, what puerile minds the authors of such a story must have had! Oh! ye who can boast of education and enlightenment! whose intellects should be brighter than your ancestors, can it be possible that ye can swallow this monstrous fable without even giving a sly glimpse of reason to penetrate it? Awake to the light of truth and reason ye who, under superstition's spell, still slumbereth!

The origin of languages! Whence shall you derive the knowledge? From the mock authority of the past? Vain the hope! Foolish the endeavour! For, think of the many centuries that have rolled into eternity, and how far, in consequence of those fabulous tales that have been disseminated, you are lagging behind your immortal destiny! Therefore seek it not in the teachings of those whose whole existence has been absorbed in the selfish desire of building up sects for their own personal ends. Seek it not in those lessons which are antagonistic to what you know, and see, and feel to be true in the works of

Digitized by Google

God around you. Look for it not in the dogmas which deaden the affections, which stifle the Divine love that is implanted within you, and which forbid you to utilise your reason. Hope not to find it in the teachings that conflict day by day, and hour by hour with the Divine attributes of knowledge and love, which are a part of your nature. Grope not thus darkly amid the tottering ruins, which past ages of ignorance and superstition have left in your path. Take a retrospective glance at the progress of the past. What a lesson to be there learned! How little the secrets and avocations of the priesthood (who have claimed to be the advanced guards of civilization—while in reality they have been the very reverse—the very enemies to progression) have been understood! What a powerful hold they have possessed on the minds of the world, and how little good they accomplished! Alas! for human nature, which has suffered these self-constituted keepers of men's consciences to arrogantly dictate to its ignorance what its reason feared to investigate. Alas! for a world which would submit to be led by men, who, while asserting that they comprehend the laws of God, have disseminated the errors of their superstitious creeds.

Holy men! Priests of God! call you them? They have been the drones of the human hive, who have preyed on the finest feelings of man—the instinct of his soul. They have been the stumbling-block to progress; for they have imprisoned thought and reason, and sent countless souls into the spirit-world with a lie upon their lips, and without the least knowledge of their destiny. Not satisfied with driving man to despair in this life, they have sent his spirit terrified into the spheres, with their anathemas clinging to him like an accursed thing. Have they given one true idea of God? On the contrary; they have made Him a pseudo god enacting a farce before all creation. Holy priests they have been designated; but I say they have been, and are, priests of unrighteousness —the banes of society!

Digitized by Google

It was well known upon the earth whilst I sojourned there that two thousand distinct languages were spoken among its various people; and I dare to say that there are now nigh three thousand different languages spoken upon earth. The methods of conveying ideas that float through the brain are manifold; and we will presently examine the subject. Before doing so, however, I shall quote as literally as I can the following passage from the book of which I have made mention, as having been written in hieroglyphics:—"After centuries of constant study I have failed to trace the origin of the first man or the first woman but from certain observations which I have been enabled to make of the planet called Earth, combined with information derived from ancient records and manuscripts, I am impressed with the conviction that the first spot inhabited by man was the more elevated lands of that quarter of the globe called Asia. The lower-lying portions at the present day, below a certain altitude (which now are very considerable), could not have been trodden by man at the very remote period when he first appeared, for at that far distant era—many thousands of years gone by—they had not made their appearance above the surface of the ocean, whose domains were then more extended than at present. Those submerged lands of yore are now ornamented with vegetation, and enriched by the presence of civilisation." He who wrote the work from which I have just quoted this passage can remember when a large part of the earth, now inhabited, consisted of mere rocks and coral reefs, hidden low beneath the waters, out of sight of man—yea, beneath the waters of the deep! This account is at variance with the biblical version; and I maintain that a moderate amount of observation, aided by reason, will record a verdict against the latter, which no one, divested of prejudice and ignorance, will gainsay. The same with regard to languages, which I strenuously affirm were not given to man as an instantaneous gift—upon the wayward impulse of a moment—

Digitized by Google

but that they were acquired as the result of centuries of cultivation. The human intellect had to gradually expand—the faculties had to enlarge—ere the mind or brain could have the power even to engender the thoughts which language subsequently expressed.

It is stated in that book of antiquity from which I have quoted, that language must have come to man, not in one moment, as has been taught the Christian world, but as his requirements demanded that which was necessary to his well-being, and as his faculties became enlarged, affording him a power of perception (which he slowly and by degrees took advantage of), that a mode of speech, by utilising the tongue, would be of essential service in all the relations pertaining to his life. Hitherto his power of expressing himself had been merely on a par with those of the most intelligent of the lower animals. Some may say that man at this infantile stage of his development had instinct alone to guide him. But I say he possessed something more than instinct at that early epoch. When he attained a power of transmitting his sentiments by a mode of vocal speech he was, it will be admitted, a degree above the monkey in intelligence and intellect. That animal, however, possesses more than instinct, which is simply a quality that endows its possessor with the power of intuition—the gift of immediate perception—jumping to an instant conclusion, without any deduction from premises. Now it is well-known that *that* animal, whose form resembles the human more than any other, enjoys limited reasoning powers; for instance, he uses sticks in self-defence, and if he happens to be in a cocoa-nut tree when any one assails him, he will pluck the fruit and cast it at his assailant. Can you call that instinct? I say 'tis knowledge; for he knows that the stick he is handling is capable, rightly used, of inflicting upon an enemy a disabling blow, thereby proving an inference drawn from observation, or a lesson learnt by instruction. Again, there

Digitized by Google

are other classes of animals which construct, before the cold weather sets in, suitable habitations for themselves. What impels them to the erection of these? I repeat, 'tis more than instinct—'tis knowledge. I think you must grant that it is so. What otherwise would suggest to those animals the necessity of thus providing for themselves and their offspring? Simple as these illustrations are to the merely unobservant, yet they are of inestimable interest and worth to myself and, I doubt not, to every contemplative and well cultivated mind. I have just slightly touched upon them for the purpose of opening, as it were, a river of instruction to you.

Oh! instinct, that reveals to the mind intuition, which whispers impressively to every one that there is a Life the Source of all life, how much are all animated creatures indebted to thee. Behold the eagle as he soars high above the earth; mark the swoop he makes when his keen eye detects the prey which he is about to claim. In that bird is instinct which existed long before man did tread the earth. See how quickly he descends, and watch the rush of that poor animal while fright is pictured on its mind. Terrified, and in mortal agony, it hastens to gain shelter from that which is coming to rob it of its life spark. It is more than instinct in this case. What teaches the animal that its enemy is swooping to seize its life? Is it instinct only?—that quality which is as different to knowledge as night is to day. One is inherent, the other acquired. Instinct acts independently of knowledge, and answers only to the call of Nature; while knowledge is an illumination of the mind, gained by its powers of observation or from instruction.

The evidences of knowledge pertain not only to the particular animals to which I have alluded, but they appear throughout the vast creation, though in a lesser degree than that possessed by man. Such a quality is as conspicuous miles beneath the surface of the briny ocean as on the summits of the highest

Digitized by Google

mountains. In the running brook you can see it as well as in the stagnant waters. I term it knowledge, not because I read of it as being so in the book referred to, but because I have arrived at such a conclusion from observations specially conducted by myself. Take for instance the well-known cases of fish, which, at certain periods of the year, are in the habit of going up and down streams to shallow or deep water for purposes of procreation and recuperation. These migrations, which are ofttimes extended to a great distance, afford unmistakeable indications of foreknowledge in those piscatorial travellers. A fish, also, does not lack affection for its young You have no doubt observed the solicitude manifested by the guides as their diminutive charges have been following in their wake, a solicitude indicative of that pre-eminent quality, love, animating the finny tribe, which, however, is not exclusively possessed by fish alone, but by every one of the lower orders of creation. It is omnipresent throughout the Universe. All creation is characterised by these two qualities of which I have spoken. Of knowledge let not man boast that he is the sole and exclusive possessor, for the contemned brute and other classes of Nature also participate—some in a very marked manner—in that attribute. The faculties of some may perhaps be exercised in an apparently mystical manner, mystic to man's comprehension, but that they exist is undoubted by spirits who are endowed with a clearer and more penetrating perception than man while in the physical body.

We will follow the illustration a little further, for I am reminded of an incident in connection with my boyhood, an incident confirmatory of what I have been advancing.

During my youthful days I was one day seated on the bank of a brook in the immediate neighbourhood of a rookery, where, in a branch of a tree overhead, was a nest, which I perceived was attacked by a bird termed the magpie The noise made by the terrified and unfledged rooks immediately

Digitized by Google

brought to the rescue all the elder birds of the rookery who were within hearing, and the intruder was expelled and pursued by the indignant and angry rooks far away beyond the vicinity of their roost. On their return some of them set about feeding the birds in the nest which had been so ruthlessly attacked, the parent bird evidently being absent. This incident engendered in my mind a feeling redolent of sympathy. Then why should man. . . . . I shall have to say good night in consequence of the medium's chest.*

* Prior to this, during the lecture, the medium, owing to a cold from which he was suffering, had been several times released from the trance, each release being succeed by a fit of coughing.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XXII.

DELIVERED 12TH MARCH, 1875.

GOOD EVENING, FRIENDS. I left you suddenly the other evening, not because I wished to do so, but owing to the adverse circumstances surrounding the Medium, rendering the continuance of the lecture impossible. To-night I hope to be enabled to fill the gap left by the abrupt termination ; and as the Medium's state of health is far from being robust, the sooner a commencement is made the better.

I have a remark to make respecting the blank verse which I tried to pass through the Medium on the last occasion of our meeting.* You see how utterly we fail sometimes. If I had waited patiently until I had had the Medium's brain under thorough control, I might have accomplished that which I had in my mind ; but through being anxious—as you are sometimes—I began to use the brain of the Medium before it was sufficiently placid or passive. Had I waited until I had passed the general lecture through, I might have succeeded. This incident, will, however, tend to show you that we in spirit-life are subject to natural law, and, like you in earth-life, are liable to make mistakes, more particularly so when we return to the mundane plane.

When I last left you we were reflecting on the affection manifested by the bird termed crow or rook. The scene I

---

* An attempt (as the Lecturer remarked) was made, at the previous seance, to expatiate on the origin of languages in the form of blank verse ; but after a few lines had been rendered a failure ensued, owing to a cause or causes unknown to the members of the circle.

Digitized by Google

witnessed at that rookery, which I told you of, created within me a profound impression, and it has not been, nor is it likely to be, forgotten or effaced from my memory. The noise that immediately succeeded the appearance of the rapacious magpie at the nest of the infant rooks was evidently a signal; it needed not a second shrill cry—one signal was evidently sufficient to arouse the ornithological city. Immediately succeeding the alarm, the whole of the rooks present had forsaken their nests to assemble in defence of the fledgelings. Here is a lesson, out of innumerable similar instances, that could be related for the edification of man. How many poor homeless wanderers are there in and about your city, who are passed with a cold shoulder, heedless of their wretchedness and misery, by those who are better circumstanced. The latter do not, as the birds, assemble to the rescue of the helpless ones, though with their lips they pray "That mercy we to others show, that mercy Lord grant us." Oh! ye, who are rich in the possession of the good things of this earth, ponder well over this simple anecdote, and think of the fountain of love these crows had for the weak and helpless young! They guard and cherish them with an affection not exceeded even by the most affectionate of mankind, and do not think themselves—as too many of the latter do—above showing such natural attention to their young.

I now pass on to the civilisation of man, the mystery attending which I cannot solve; but I am in accord with the account given in the book from which I have quoted. Man, if looked at far enough back, will be seen to have been an ignorant savage, who progressed as the world progressed. Everything in nature points to such a conclusion. From the period when man first emerged from the mere animal state or condition until the present, has been a space so vast as to be ungraspable by his intellect; from the time that man first stood erect until now centuries innumerable have passed.

Digitized by Google

I heard a remark here the other evening which will bear explanation. It was said that the chicken of the present day, on emerging from the egg, differed in no essential point from the chicken of a thousand years ago.* I differ from this altogether, for progress is and ever has been incessantly at work in everything. There are breeds of animals existing now which did not grace the world a thousand years ago. And all animals, though not perhaps in some instances marked by man's perception, have been developed as much as man himself. All creation around you speaks to your minds in language redolent of eloquence that (although imperceptible as some cases may be to your powers of observation) development in the multifarious creatures of earth is ever going forward. Many changes are taking place which you can perceive, but there are many others going forward which you cannot perceive! Since I have left the earth to take up my everlasting abode in the spheres, a large number of different kinds of animals and birds have come into existence. The multitudinous species are multiplying and improving year by year, century by century.

Since the comparatively short period of my having quitted earth, man also has made many improvements. Three hundred years ago what was known of mesmerism, electricity, steam, and all the other great powers that are now playing such conspicuous parts upon the earth? These different agents have now become the servants of man. In my time they would have been ascribed to the spirit of darkness. Excluding mesmerism, concerning which little is yet known by the generality of men, those agents are now looked upon as a matter of course, as of every-day occurrence. When once a thing becomes an every-day event, it loses the charm incidental to novelty. Had one of those powers been suddenly introduced upon the earth without any preliminary notice, how startling

* The remark was made by the Editor.

Digitized by Google

to man's equanimity would the event have been! He would have been as scared as the savage when he recoils at the first detonation of a gun or rifle.

In regard to the special development of man, the head of the animal creation, I cannot picture more than others have done before me, I can only give you my opinion of the manner in which this development took place.

The deepest that we can see into this profound secret of Nature is that period in the era of his progression when he, as it were, became a magnet, which drew towards him all the vital sparks of life contained in the whole Works of God. As regards his physical conformation, he affords striking proof that he is the grand ultimate of all beneath him, an improvement on every other animal. His characteristics appear to be so intimately blended with the peculiarities of the animals around him, that it would appear as if in him were found attributes which are inherent in the species of every created thing—in the chicken, in the mouse, in the sheep, in the ox, in the horse, in the wildest beast that walks the forests of the earth. This accounts for the different characteristics manifest in the human family; where is to be found the quiet, contemplative mind, with the disposition of the sheep or lamb; while, on the other hand, there are beings of flesh and blood, in the guise of humanity, revelling in all the wildest passions that disgrace the animals of the forest.

Possessing, as man does, all the various peculiarities of the separate orders of animals, it is easy to perceive why he should have been chosen to receive that other part of his nature, which, while it places him at the head of the animal creation, makes him immortal—constitutes him a being possessed of a never-ending existence.

In regard to associative influences: if you were to take an infant, born of the most intellectual parents, and place it among savages, think you it would grow up any better than those with

Digitized by Google

whom it mingled? No; for the child's faculties would become depressed; they could rise no higher than the faculties of those of the people who surrounded the child. The spark of enlightenment would not be kindled upon the brain; the golden key could not be inserted in the lock; and the knowledge and wisdom which come from education and enlightenment could not be gained. The savage has sufficient ingenuity to enable him to strip the bark from the tree by which he can construct a shelter for himself. *From such a primitive condition as the savage represents has the cultured and advanced man of to-day progressed.* In the development of the race—in the advance and progress of man—every onward movement has exhibited the power and capacity of the invisible spirit, possessed of that divine emanation from God, to rise nearer and nearer towards the perfection of the great Author of its being. Step by step man reaches higher and higher, until by invisible agencies he finds his footsteps traversing those glorious spheres from which he ne'er will pass away.

(A sudden release of the Medium from control here took place, and the release was immediately succeeded by a distressing cough, which quite prostrated the Medium, and the continuation of the lecture had to be deferred).

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XXIII.

DELIVERED 16TH MARCH, 1875.

GOOD EVENING, FRIENDS! On account of the ill-health of the medium, and his gradual but surely declining strength, it has been found necessary to grant a vacation for a time, after which I hope all will have gathered fresh strength and energies to meet future experiences.

I must apologise for the sudden manner in which at times I have terminated certain lectures. This has been on account of the state of health of the medium, whom I could have continued to control if I had kept him seated and thoroughly exhausted the body by placing it in a dormant state, but this I decline to do as a rule. I certainly have done it at times when I have thought it necessary rather than disappoint those around me. But it has such a weakening effect upon our subject that I resist the temptation to repeat it too frequently. Besides, when I am able to use the body as well as the organs of speech of the medium, certain utterances can be made more emphatic to my hearers, whereas, if I make the body stiff and cold and without action, the brain alone partakes of a portion of my powers, while the body has no reaction, no life, and the words would issue through the channel without expression or animation just as cold water does through a pipe.

I have wandered away from the original subjects. I have flown far away from the thread of my discourse in these lectures, in which I have tried to lead you from earth to the realms above. There is one reason I may mention why I have deviated from that which I had in hand, and that is from my knowing that anxious enquiries were being made regarding

Digitized by Google

the subjects latterly treated of. I, therefore, thought it would be better to give you a satisfactory explanation of these things which I know to be true. I, at the same time, could not help but quote from the large volume I told you of, so that you might reap some benefit therefrom—imperfect though the information might be. It is not as if I could stand in your midst and give it to you in the language which I could bring to my aid, and I beg of those who may read these lectures to remember that the medium, through whom they are delivered, is not exactly in accord with many of the subjects which are treated in these discourses; but, notwithstanding this, he suits my purpose through his faculties being undeveloped, If he were highly educated and tutored in all the ways and learning of your world his brain would then be a motive power which I could not control. I might be enabled to throw impressions upon it; but its own ideas and imagination would predominate, and mine would have to succumb. Through his unsophisticated brain I am able to convey some of my ideas, though the language may, in many respects, be faulty.

In my last lecture I broke away when I was soliloquising on man in this manner: Man can attain to certain things. He can reach a confidence of power which I will term a passive confidence. He can also attain a certain power that becomes active, for, when he once obtains the mastery of anything he utilises the knowledge. There are a few who are taught and learn the highest of your professions, and have studied almost from childhood the mysteries surrounding the human organisation and that which controls it, and other secrets of Nature have they attempted to master, irrespective of popular prejudice; but such students are rare indeed. The great majority, unfortunately, never attempt to move beyond the narrow groove of orthodox restrictions. To act otherwise they deem unprofessional, poor silly slaves of custom. To show how far man can go, or how far he can attain in science,

Digitized by Google

you have only to glance at that which is considered one of the greatest professions of your day, viz., the medical. Lead a doctor to a sick bed where he or she is suffering acutely all the pangs of torture. You require not to be told that it is so —you can see it marked on that face of agony. Bring the disciple of the healing art to that sufferer who, we will say, is afflicted inwardly by a malady of a nature mystical to the doctor, and he will most likely say, "If I was certain where the disease was situated then I could cure it." But what is it that prevents his seeing it? The coating of flesh and blood, like a rock, hurls back defiance. Without a single leg to stand on—without a single arm to hold it up—this science, as yet practised, has to yield precedence to the clairvoyant. The doctor may have known all that was essential to cure the disease, but of the important fact of its locality, he was ignorant. He knew there was something wrong; but he was unable to dive among the flowers and pluck the weed, for want of—what? The development of the higher faculties to enable him to fathom Nature's secrets. When Nature's laws and man's learning blend together, men will be able with certainty to relieve the sick, heal the blind, cure the deaf, and make him who is crooked to walk straight. Nature's laws will rise above those who ignore them; they ne'er can be placed beneath their feet. In years to come, the now undeveloped spiritual faculties, or powers, in man will be made to walk hand in hand with science, which is knowledge systematized. They will be both blended together, and the time will be when both shall wear a crown of truth, undecorated by any earthly jewels, but adorned with the laurels becoming Truth in its purity, simplicity, and beauty.

I shall now refer to another subject. Some have asked: What has brought man to the advanced state which he at present occupies? I can point to some human tribes who are as low in the scale as some of the lower animals. I can

Digitized by Google

tell you where there are beings in humanity's guise who are no better than—nay, possessing not such good qualities as—some of your domesticated animals. Once man enters upon a state of civilisation it requires no keen perception to see that the more advanced he gets—that is to say, the more he makes use of those things which surround his nature—the more comfort and the more knowledge he will obtain, whether he conceals or shows it. As man raises himself from the mere savage condition of the animal, so does he develop the necessity of government; and it is only when he is on a level with the brute creation that he exists without any form of government. When the intellect of the immortal soul is infused in his being there is impressed upon his instincts the necessity of laws to control the community which surrounds him. In the history of the earth it will have been perceived that man has most advanced in his career thereon when the intellectual and moral nature of the people, more than the physical, have been cultivated. But where the rule of force—the domination of individual will—has obtained, there degradation and debasement have been prominent.

Look at some of the lower tribes of savages, and note their mode of living, the manner in which they act, &c., and you can immediately trace on them the effects of the low diet they have been in the habit of using. Pass on and survey civilisation, and you will perceive that those who are brought up and surrounded by the delicacies of the world, who are waited upon and have every want satisfied, are generally more pleasing and are better looking. Why is the difference between the two so marked? Knowledge, civilisation, the comforts that surround the more advanced individual, actually promote the outward appearance of beauty, as well as engender inward culture and knowledge.

Education was not brought upon this earth with a magic wand. It came like the tidal wave of time, wafting its pure

Digitized by Google

and simple influence over all it came in contact with, breathing into them sweet words of power, raising them step by step from the grovelling position of savages; gradually advancing them to the position they now occupy.

Every thoughtful mind will agree with me in saying that if, at this very moment, the gates of heaven were thrown ajar, and the waters of eternal life were shed o'er the earth it would not be one hour too soon; for, as man's knowledge has increased so have his trust and faith in immortality decreased. But THE NEW DISPENSATION, like a star, or sun in a cloudless sky, now shines upon man's path, which it will irradiate with its glowing beams; it will glow and expand, shedding new light at every step in the pathway of life.

As man gradually realises his powers, so do his inward faculties expand, and the being that he is dawns upon his mind. He then wishes to know what his existence will be after his earth-life. The absurd fables, which satisfied the minds of his ancestors, he cannot believe. His more expanded reasoning faculties will not allow him to receive as truth the old tales, which indicate the superstitious imaginations of a barbarous age. The spirit of the present day is essentially more rational than any preceding period. We join hands with the rationalists to work for a new and more worthy idea of God, and a better conception of man and his destiny, than has hitherto obtained.

I have frequently heard such questions as: "What is that called Life? Am I really an animal? Do I die, and shall I be seen no more? Are all the children that I see around me to depart for ever from me? Are they to pass eternally from me when I lie cold and stiff? I, that toiled and worked to make them happy—is it to be so? Are those that cleared the road for me before my advent upon earth—whose work I see around me—non-existent, or am I ever to be re-united with them? Are they gone for ever from me? Am I to think of

Digitized by Google

them as extinguished? Am I merely an animal without a soul? If not, what am I?" And what is the popular answer to these questions? A mere cloud—a shadow—a dream—no real path traced out, but one of mockery and corruption; not one that arrests and satisfies the reason of man—that appeals to the dearest ties that he has made upon earth—not one that binds the conscience to that which should be as large and expansive as the ocean, but one that is as contracted as the tiniest rivulet. Am I an animal merely? Or do I possess a nature besides it that is destined to exist beyond this life?" That is the question for those who profess to be man's spiritual advisers, to answer; and the question lies unanswered. They can only picture to you something brilliant and grand, but when the light of reason is thrown upon it, its absurdity becomes apparent at once.

I now take another subject, viz., the Deluge, which is treated of in the book I have quoted from previously. This term deluge is spoken of in Theology as referring to a time when the earth was flooded or covered all over with water. It really should take little argument to convince your minds of the utter absurdity—the thorough impossibility of such a thing having happened; I should like to ask those who may chance to read these pages what became of the surplus waters? and to remind them that at the time indicated very little of the earth was known, beyond the higher parts of Asia, where—as I said before—man first came into existence. There may, certainly, have been different savage tribes scattered all over the higher parts of the earth in other portions of the globe, but, as I have on a former occasion stated, in the infancy of the race the lower lands that are now dry were covered by the ocean.

Now, appealing to those who choose to read, let us take into consideration the time at which the Deluge is said to have happened. At that time a vast amount of ignorance and priestcraft ruled the day; and although there were numbers

Digitized by Google

of so-called prophets or seers they cast but little light upon the darkness around. At that epoch the speed in travelling was very different from that attained in these days. To go a journey then of even a hundred miles, was a momentous event, occupying as many days as hours now will suffice to traverse the same distance. In the part of the earth where this deluge occurred, or rather is said to have occurred, foaming torrents and rivers flowed from towering mountains, and did not have their course to the sea as your rivers do now; but they ran into lakes and from the lakes they issued as rivers again, and thus they caused the land to look low, notwithstanding the altitude of the plateaux from which the surrounding mountains rose. The inhabitants of these elevated plains may have seen the waters rapidly increasing, and have exclaimed, "Here is a flood! Let us quickly away!" And, as they saw the torrent expanding and rising, they may probably have thought that if they could only reach the mountains they would be out of danger; but the waters coming higher and rapidly surrounding them, they naturally took to a raft, hastily constructed, which rose with the flood until it rested on the side of a mountain, where they sojourned until the subsidence of the waters, when, doubtless, these semi-savages descended from this place of safety, having been nearly overcome by the great flood, from which, according to the bible, they had been preserved by a "Special Providence."*

The Medium was here released from the trance. On the resumption of the discourse, after the lapse of twenty minutes, the Lecturer said:—Those who have imbibed these biblical teachings, which have been disseminated as truth, will now

* Such, probably, was the foundation on which the oral tradition about the Deluge was based. That piece of naval architecture termed the Ark and its floating menagerie were, doubtless, the accretions of succeeding ages.

Digitized by Google

find—if they have not done so before—that they can be designated as none other than childish fables, whose decorations I will endeavour to remove, and replace with the naked truth. These wretched teachings have held prolonged sway over the human heart; and it is the duty of all who are animated by the love of truth, to expose their falsity, absurdity, and misleading character.

I strongly incline to the belief that, were a being of a description similar to that which Noah (if such an individual ever lived) then presented, to appear in the midst of a fashionable assembly of what is termed "Christian worshippers," many of the seats in the immediate neighbourhood of the intruder (for I think he would be deemed such), would be hastily vacated. What an imagination that must have been which could conceive of Noah floating about encased in an ark, or naval architectural design, with all the species of the earth with him! He ne'er could have gathered all the animals then living—thousands of them he never saw and never heard of; and if he had, think you that an establishment constructed by an ignorant savage could contain them all? Who now can conceive the great Noah as drifting on the ocean of waters in a rude raft or canoe for forty days with the multifarious animals around him, and unprovided with food for his large family? Is it not preposterous? He who believes this absurd fable of the Deluge, as recorded in the bible, and the special providence connected with it, is nothing more or less than an irrational being, who loves darkness rather than the light.

(Invocation.) Oh! Spirit of Light, of Love and of Glory! Whose magnificence decorates all space, and Whose planets contribute their glory to glorify Thee! Thy works are beautiful to behold! The further we use the intellect which Thou hast bestowed upon us—the more we can throw aside the curtain and survey Thy creations—the more wonderful Thou becomest to us.

Digitized by Google

Oh! Thou Great and Mighty Being! yet whose greatness consists not in size, as man generally estimates, but Who art in everything, and Who flowest through everything! Thou glorious Light of lights! Thou Eternal Stream of streams! Thou River of rivers! Thou vast King of space and time, bound in the midst of love and affinity, all we can offer to, all we can say of Thee, can add naught to Thy glory. Thou great and yet so humble! Thou loving and so kind! Thou gentle and so pure! that even the purest of us cannot and do not feel ourselves worthy to inhale the breath of Thy Life. We ask Thee to cast Thy tender care around us, and to invest us with the crown of life and immortality. We cannot know, Oh! God, the future of all things which Thou beholdest, for Thou art the sole Omniscient Being of Thy stupendous universe! Thou art the Light of lights, the Glory of glories, and hast cast the shadow of Thy wings around us. Oh! then, Father, teach those who have to follow us that Thy laws must be obeyed, and tell them that those dear ones they loved when on earth, though they have left their bodily forms, still exist beyond the grave! Yea, they have arisen, and walk and speak with those whom they lovingly await—wearing crowns surpassing those of the earthly stamp. All this, Oh, Mighty Deity, hath been brought about by Thy loving kindness. Good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XXIV.

DELIVERED 2ND MAY, 1875.

GOOD EVENING. Spirit of all life and all glory—of all beauty, and replete with beams and rays of eternal life; shadowing forth Thy loving tenderness upon us! We are, indeed, blessed this evening in being able once more to re-unite in spiritual fellowship and communion. Thy golden portals are ever open, and Thy sweet, musical utterances are ever extended to reach our ears; they constantly aid to increase the brightness of our intellect, and spread the beams of happiness o'er our lives. It is needless to ask Thee to scatter Thy flowers; for Thou hast scattered them over all creation, and in Thy love Thou hast united the blessed spirits of the departed with those who are yet on earth. Thou hast opened the portals of learning, and hast so arranged the road to knowledge that each one of Thy creatures tends to impart information and wisdom to the other. Thy calm love—Thy glorious beauty need not the bombast of different teachings and doctrines to uphold their dignity; for they are wrapt in their own enchanting glory—enclosed in space and time; and no hand can grasp them—no mind can truly comprehend them. Strew then, Oh! Father, our path, not with gems, but with a better knowledge of Thee, whose radiant splendour will reveal itself, as it opens out to our minds the profoundest depths of thought and the highest powers of love that ever can be grafted on the mind.

We, as spiritual beings, can worship and adore Thee for Thy wondrous beauty, which we failed to perceive when we viewed it from the earthly temple.

Digitized by Google

Oh! Omnipotent Being! We invoke Thee to assist us in spreading abroad upon the earth a knowledge of realities not of shams, that those chains which fettered our forefathers may soon become broken by Thy magic wand, which strikes sweet chords of music and strews our way with the brightest and choicest flowers. What other blessings, then, have we to ask of Thee? Or what addition of glory can we offer to Thee? Vast bridges have spanned space enabling us to enjoy constant communion with those who tread the land which we once trod before them. Thy gates are not sealed to those who wish to enter. Thy grand truths are not for the few only; for Thou hast thrown open Thy loving arms, and hast welcomed all to the fountain of true life. The greatest praise that spirits can offer to Thee falls unnoticed, like the leaves from the trees. Even in those who know Thy works best wisdom is as nought. What, then, must be the offerings of those who know Thee not?

> Even like specks upon the sky—
> A moment seen, then fleeting, die.

I shall not attempt to-night to place the Medium in the deepest trance, or touch upon the highest themes. This must be done gradually. My object this evening will merely be to recall to your minds the subject we were treating of when we left you sometime ago.

I may here take the opportunity of saying that our re-union gives me much pleasure, and I will endeavour to carry out those higher objects which I had in view, if the health of the Medium will permit me so doing.

As I pass over the manuscripts that I have by me I perceive many things which surprise me. I see the absurdity of trying to bring to your minds even the slightest glimmer of the realities which surround us in the spirit-land. Whatever language I use, is but as the setting of a gem; the jewel itself remains unpictured. On some subjects we cannot reach

Digitized by Google

the organs of your mind ; for it is impossible to picture to you scenes of which the mind has had no previous conception. When we attempt to convey our ideas of subjects that have not been even dreamt of by you, the organization of the Medium is incapable of imparting them as we could wish.

If we had flown to you on the wings of Time, and portrayed to you some grand, brilliant and unnatural scenes, captivating to man's love of the mystical ; if we were enabled and disposed to bestow upon mankind every blessing—crowning them with their heart's fondest desires, we should then have been welcomed, believed in, and sought after ; but because we come picturing to them only such things and scenes as are natural and true many fail to understand us, and scoff at us as impostors. If you take an infant, and place in its hands one of the rarest of gems, it will not, because it cannot, value it, but casts it aside, taking not the slightest interest in it, for its mind has not yet been trained to appreciate its value or beauty. But after that infant has grown in mind as well as in stature, it has learned to value such gems as an adornment, and desires to possess them. As with the child and the unappreciated jewel, so with the sceptical and irrational mind in regard to an analogous existence beyond the grave ; and the only alternative left for us to adopt—the only one consistent with truth and love—is to picture to receptive minds, as far as words will express, life and scenes in the spirit-world such as they are, divested of all visionary decorations, which only falsify the sweet reality. This is our grand aim, and not to misrepresent the ordained course and order of Nature. If there are others who choose to make a heaven of their own fancy, peopled with beings of their own imagination, it is no business of ours, if they, thereby, form around them their own spheres of happiness, well and good. But we implore all to look beyond the present and try to realise that eternal, never-ending destiny to which they are tending. Ideas imbibed from the cradle cannot be eradicated in a day. It takes

Digitized by Google

ages of time to exterminate those deeply-rooted prejudices which have swayed the individual, and to cause him to accept truer and more rational views. This cannot be done in a brief space. It must be the work of Nature's grand laws. Nature, which is the mystic healer that brings balm to the wounded. Not by any harsh or rapid process does she conquer these great difficulties and obstructions in the human mind; but it is by the gradual lapse of time that she places the mind through different stages, and as it passes through each degree it leaves some foible behind it; thus in time it steps forth in its natural beauty, unclouded by any unbecoming appearances, and gives ample testimony to that glorious faculty that ennobles its being.

Would that I could take you to-night, as I was taken, into the presence of those kind friends who are ever ready to watch over our interests.

Imagine yourselves upon the borders of a river whose sands are golden, and whose dazzling waters dance in the sunlight of heaven. Such a scene was riveted on my mind, as, perhaps, you may remember some beautiful scene on a summer evening upon your earth. The scene I saw had such a charming softness that even the faintest rustle caused by the slightest zephyrs among the foliage of the trees would, in my estimation, have disturbed the harmony of its exquisite quiet and loveliness. It was Nature speaking in all her solemnity. It was Nature's soft spirit that awoke in me new thoughts—new ideas; for I seemed to have been brought into affinity with her, and to have become the recipient of her secrets and the outpouring of her mystic laws.

I stood as one enchanted, and as the lovely scene passed before me in its wondrous beauty it appeared to carry me, as you would say, calmly and serenely away. I became so wrapped in its loveliness that I heeded not the passage of time, or what is termed the "passing of time." 'Twas a delicious reverie, but at last the spell swept o'er me, and a spirit

Digitized by Google

stood by my side. He was clothed in pure white, and around his brow hovered a ring of light, which, close to his forehead, formed itself into a star; he also held in his hand an emblem of the like description. He spoke to me in these words: "Long have you wished to know the mysteries surrounding the race that occupies the earth-world. The magic power that exerts such influence there is jealousy, or ambition, if you prefer me to call it such. It is this which causes the blood-stained sword to repeat its work, and men have fallen one by one, goaded on in their pursuits and exploits by ambition. Some have victory gained, while others have been cast prostrate by defeat. I will take you to other scenes and show you that ambition is necessary, however, to the progress of the human race—though you may not understand this. It is only in the so-called inanimate kingdoms that ambition is quiescent. It cannot intrude on Nature's sacred bower. But man, when he has attained what he, in his more youthful days, had deemed the object of his desires, finds the goal still unwon, and ambition still spurs him on." I asked, "What is this passion, ambition, and why is it necessary to the human race?" The answer was: "Thou knowest that progression is a law of Nature as well as a law of mind. If all the human race were not tinged with ambition at times, sloth would reign supreme, and lazy folks, upon their haunches reclining, would beguile their time away in idle dreams and fancies. But ambition stirs them up, and awakes within them a fire, and 'tis this fire that raises men to princes, to kings, and to thrones."

How often do you see a man pushing on and striving to gain a position. What is it that is the incentive? Why, ambition! Ambition is the groundwork of all man's actions. What laws would not ambition render useless! I have seen mighty mischief and vast destruction perpetrated by ambition. Ambition is the motive power that urges on the human family

Digitized by Google

to the golden gates of glory, but it takes away the peace that makes the home happy. It disturbs the monarch's rest, and although it hastens the progress of the human race in a certain way, still it implants passions in the heart that otherwise would have been unknown. In man's attempt to climb the ladder of fame what is it that tempts him onward? It is ambition—the mighty cog-wheel that works him on. It can be traced from the child, who can scarcely lisp its mother's name, to the learned man in his study.

The human race is so constructed that they never will be satisfied with their lot, for if they were progress would cease; but they have, as an incentive, ambition to spur them onward. It is ambition that induces the student to study hard and rack his brain to gain the goal of his hopes and aims. See the warrior who tries to raise himself to the height of his profession—to secure a high command and have thousands of his fellows to obey his behests and lead them on to victory, whereby to write his name on the scroll of fame. All scientific and learned men are impelled forward by ambition to bring their discoveries and researches into prominence before the world. This is the best way I can illustrate it. Imagine a golden ladder, with its many rungs, whose height no eyesight can perceive, and upon each step imagine a human being, each one pushing the next onward and upward in his attempt to attain the acme of his desires—the topmost step of the ladder. It is ambition that urges them on, and it is this same passion that has brought civilisation to the state which it now can boast. But, sad to say, it is also ambition which cheats man of his heart's hope of enjoying rest and peace.

Rejoice, oh, my friends, for you are strangers to the "Rack"—the foe to liberty! It has been consigned to oblivion, and the great field of Liberty expands itself in its glorious beauty. In my time upon this earth liberty of

Digitized by Google

tongue and pen were denied; the freedom of speech which now obtains would then have consigned you to the block or flames. You would have been launched into eternity for such things as are now written and spoken.

Let us here return to where the spirit clothed in white addressed me. I seemed to be floating on the wings of time, and I saw in the distance a beautiful mountain, and as I came nearer astonishing scenes surrounded me. I observed harmony, lovely and true, permeating everything around, and an irresistible feeling appeared to lead me gently on towards that pleasant looking hill, over which I buoyantly soared, where I was gratified by a sight of glory and brightness, and where I immediately became surrounded by friends I had parted from long ago, and whom, I had been told, I should never see more, for they, it was said, had passed to heaven! But now—delightful to say so! I saw them, in their love, drawn to me from the east and from the west. They lovingly held me, trying to impress me with the pure feeling which they entertained and cherished for me, until I felt overwhelmed with kindness, and gradually subsided into something like slumber. Sweet music then came floating o'er my sense of hearing, and its powers awakened me fully from my spiritual sleep, and for a moment I felt I was as pure as the beings surrounding me. murmured my grateful thanks for their loving attendance upon me during the moments of my slumber; and they told me they had watched me for the purpose of trying to lead me gently on. Oh! that I could ever breathe the delicious perfumes that seemed to waft o'er my soul! was the thought that then passed through my mind. My friends appeared to have placed me under a spell, and as I looked around me I saw borders of lovely flowers adorning that happy land. I thought, how pleasant and how sweet to pass away to such a scene as this; to this joyous spirit-sphere, surrounded by happy and loving friends,

Digitized by Google

united to you by affinity, and linked by the chain of immortality! Never ceasing—always loving—are the words that tell of the time when mother and daughter will be re-united, and father and son be blended, no more to part; and that, when you go to that radiant home, you will be surely and warmly welcomed. The loving ones are incessantly endeavouring to instil into the minds which need it, the consoling intelligence that none are lost—none are altogether bad; but that the worst are capable of rising higher and higher until they reach the development necessary to ensure their entry into the most glorious sphere of the spirit-world for eternity.

Swing open ye gates that are ever swinging! Flow on ye rivers that are ever pouring over golden sands—showing that all is brightness—that all is day! Proclaim how each one there is purified, carrying his church within his spiritual heart, and praising God alone by aiding and blessing his fellow-beings.

Bedew us all, Oh! Father, with Thy love and Thy tranquility; we implore Thee not for the decorations of earthly splendour, but that we may become worthy of Thy love. Bless us with the tree of Knowledge, whose golden branches send forth their strength and power, whose acquisition will the better enable us to comprehend Thy glorious works and Thy infinite wisdom.

As Nature calls each one to the silvery shores—the everlasting abodes of spirit—may he step upon them as a soldier and lover of Truth and Justice, and not, Oh! Father, as an enemy of Thy holy and immutable decrees. Good-night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XXV.

DELIVERED 9TH MAY, 1875.

GOOD NIGHT. I now wish your minds to revert to the incident in connection with the spirit draped in white, with whom I was engaged in deep thought by the side of the river. Approaching me again, he spoke to me in these words :—"Friend! I feel a strange influence—an influence that seems to raise within me an inspirational voice of praise. I know that there is to be a visitor to us, and he is of a high order. I think that there is a journey before us, upon which we will have to start rather suddenly." These words had scarcely passed his spiritual lips, when I, also, felt an influence stealing o'er me, which drew me forward to a cluster of trees, where I had not long stood before I noticed a bright light, somewhat similar to a halo, which came towards us; and a nearer view of which revealed a spirit within the halo which completely enveloped the form. The spirit addressed us thus :—"Arise quickly! speed away with me, and I will show you a scene in the highest plane of this (the fourth) sphere. You must not stop or tarry to look at the various places that are likely to attract your attention on the transit, as you will have an opportunity of doing so, after your return, which, I fear, will, in a manner, be not altogether pleasant to you."

I was then lifted, or borne away, and we passed through regions of beauty and quietness, here and there studded with cities which were larger and grander than any I had heretofore seen. I was anxious to linger and view the aspect of the different grades; but our guide would not entertain the idea, telling us that he would lead us to sights which would enable

Digitized by Google

us hereafter, to judge of true grandeur and beauty. Quickly we were borne onward in a manner totally new to me; but the rapidity of our passage did not prevent me observing numerous buildings, similar, in a degree, to many of your earth, but of a more refined order. We arrived at our destination, and I will attempt to describe the appearance of things there presented to our view. As we drew near I noticed that the o'er-arched vault was beautified by azure and golden-coloured clouds, somewhat similar to those occasionally seen at sunset in some favoured region of earth, when there is a quietness of beauty all over Nature, when she seems to put on her most charming and becoming garments. As we proceeded along the magnetic path, the clouds appeared to part; and I here observed that the action of walking was assumed by us, and, although unusual, did not produce any weariness. As the clouds separated on our passage, dazzling objects of gorgeous beauty were brought into view. Among other things which met my observation, was a city, or world I will call it—for its size justifies the term—composed of houses of the purest whiteness. Its streets were wide, and the whole of the decorations appeared of a finer quality than were those of any city I had yet seen. The vegetation, and more particularly the flowers, arrested my attention from the many peculiarities attending them. Our guide spoke to us: "My friends, when once the spirit enters that city, to sojourn within, it must have purged itself of all its old degrading passions. It becomes there pure, and in a fit state to pass on to higher degrees. The qualities that once obtained sway within the body, and prevented spiritual progress, are then entirely cast away, and nothing remains to ensure its upward flight. Within those portals you can only remain when you have attained to that degree of perfection which will qualify you to sojourn there. Every vestige of those passions which assailed you after your exit from earth must, however, have been cast aside ere that time, when

Digitized by Google

a halcyon state of serenity and happiness will be your portion. You will then have only a desire to do unto others as you would wish them to do to you. Your thoughts will not then be centred upon yourself, but, to a great extent, will be for those surrounding you. Well may the idea of this state of bliss rest within your mind until the reality bursts upon you in all its beatitude."

As we drew up to the gates of this city we found a band of spirits keeping guard. We accosted them, and he that had guided us gave them some secret sign, when the gates were thrown open and we were admitted. I was much impressed by the fine and noble buildings I saw as I looked around me. Nothing had that gaudy appearance which too often marks the buildings and appurtenances of earth. I was led along the pavement to the precincts of what appeared to be a large hall, and there I found a difficulty again. This caused some delay in entering, but eventually the doors were thrown open and we entered, when, lo! what a sight did I see there! Dressed in the purest white, and surrounded by her friends, was my wife. The bright radiance of her face recalled to my memory the period of our earth-life, when she, the loved one, first drew me to her side; but that radiance was now heightened and intensified beyond description. When her spirit last passed from me we both participated in the thought that a re-union would occur in a brief space of time.

My feelings I could scarcely control even in that beautiful and tranquil scene. Another power apparently seized me, and I became greatly agitated, for I was made aware that her departure was drawing near, and that they were about hastening her to the Summer Land. Was I to be left behind? How could I be happy and contented while absent from her side, were the thoughts that coursed through me. I made an attempt to gain the circle in which she stood, but I was powerless to do so. I saw the magnetic influence passing

Digitized by Google

through and from each of the spirits around her, blending them in happy union. Is this the death, quoth I, that once they spoke to me of? I, again, essayed an attempt to join them, but a stronger influence restrained me, and though I tried to speak I could not; but I saw her sweet smile, and felt a keen impression of her spiritual love. I was yet unfit to be beside her, but I was told that she would ultimately become my spiritual bride. On hearing this I could no longer govern myself; but I was restrained by the influences around me. Bright and beautiful spirits seemed to touch me and awaken within my breast softer thoughts. One spoke to me: —"Friend! in this indeed, you seem your wife to need; try hard to deserve her love. Revisiting you in those scenes below she will comfort and guide you. She is now in a state of progression, and will soon awake in the Summer Land, where a spiritual band is awaiting her. She there will wait your coming." Tears—though vain they may appear to you—began to flow from my eyes as I stood and gazed at her spiritual form, while darkness appeared to close in around me, and the sweet, pure being vanished from my sight. My friend, addressing me, said:—"The reason we have shown your wife to you in a purified state, is to awaken within your bosom thoughts of progress; for, hitherto, the star of progress has not animated you as it should have done. At times when you are excited you often sorrow at your state, and strive to gain a higher stand; but as soon as the excitement wears off, you deviate from your purpose, and do not continue the ascension of that path which leads on high. Now, we have led you here to view your wife, knowing full well the true and heartfelt love you bear her; and to participate in a replete measure of that love, you must qualify yourself to rejoin her in the brighter sphere beyond. I take a sincere interest in you, and hence my desire to stir within you thoughts that will cause you to seek a purer, finer, and better state."

Digitized by Google

I then heard what seemed music in the distance, and a spirit broke in upon my vision. He was rather higher than the general standard, and was clothed in a white garment striped with a beautiful blue. He passed on to where my wife and her companions had gone, and again I heard music, whose strains were of the softest description, blending together in the sweetest harmony. I saw the clouds open, and hundreds of spirits appeared beyond. I inquired what their occupation was, and I was told they watched with loving eyes those spirits who passed away in a trance state to the Summer Land, to whose realms of bliss they attended them.

(I will here remark that I often feel, as I stand beside the Medium, as if I could break the spell that separates me from the flesh, and reveal to you scenes of greater beauty than you could e'er have conceived. They are difficult to picture to you, for their beauty is of such a nature that no earthly words can be adduced to do them justice).

I saw her whom I loved ascending higher and higher, and then she was gently wafted from my sight, in what appeared to be a sleeping state. This was my first experience of the kind, and it subsequently suggested the thought that if spirits could be so passed away under the magnetic influence, it was possible that human beings could be operated upon by the same power. It was this that stirred within me a curiosity to try our spiritual powers in this direction: anything that would bring me to her side I was willing to attempt; for it seemed to me as if my heart would be rent in twain at the thought of a prolonged separation from her.

I next heard delightful singing, the sweet cadences of which caused my spiritual form to shake with agitation. I seemed to have lost control over myself, and the bursting pangs of jealousy once more overpowered me. I was borne, I do not know how, back to the sphere whence, as stated, I had been led by the influence of the bright spirit. I writhed with

Digitized by Google

desperation—jealousy seemed burning within my very soul. I saw the panorama of my past life passing before me, and I wished I could attain to the path that would lead me upward to the being for whose love I longed, and for a moment I would soar aloft in imagination, but would soon return to the low level of jealousy.

Still I felt as if some power was gently spreading its influence around me. Then spectres would rise, and spirits, for whom I had no affinity, would tempt me and try to draw me into the path I once trod. A chilly blast swept o'er my spiritual head, which throbbed with pain, and I yearned with stronger desire than ever to reach those bright and heavenly abodes. I was rocked to sleep on a mossy couch, and then a star seemed to beckon me, and a soft, mild influence, brought before me all the phantoms that had cowered around me on earth, and had established their influence over me there, and I longed to breathe the air of purity which I had so fleetingly enjoyed.

In this vision I saw my wife once more close to me, but I could not succeed in touching her form—it was of such a dazzling brightness. No words I could utter appeared to have any effect upon her. I cried to her, and at last she answered: "I have crossed the wide, wide ocean, to those silvery shores above. I have found the gates, dear husband, of pure eternal love. I have reached the spot where flowers for ever bloom—flowers of such beauty and fragrance that, compared to those of earth, are as diamonds to ordinary stones, like the dazzling brightness of the sun to the misty moonbeams. Here are halls whose roofs are the spiritual sky. The splendour and beauty around me calls forth in prayer of thanksgiving to Him who allows me to be here. Oh! dear husband, I will tarry on these shores to await your coming, and I will be the star that will guide you through eternity. In the distance I have seen the deep blue mountains, beautiful and grand,

Digitized by Google

towering above into the ethereal sky. I have traversed the ocean you, too, will have to cross. As they carried me lovingly over it my heaving bosom was heavy when I thought of thee below. There are no dark ones here—all are pure—and you must cleanse yourself from your passions, quickly casting them, one by one, away. Do not delay; summon all your energies to the task; work as hard as you can. I will oft be with you; when thou art drooping I will raise thee; when your heart, with burning passions, is fired, I will quiet it; when your spiritual limbs are sinking, and cannot bear you up, I will support you; I will shield you, for I have power from above. Instantly commence to tread the new path; do not tarry or delay; outroot thy passions one by one, and the flowers that bloom to eternity shall reward thee. If thou lingerest like the sluggard, and rest satisfied with indulging in selfish pleasures, not trying to gain celestial knowledge, it will go hard with thee. Follow, I implore thee, my counsels; try to do good, and we will soon be re-united as one family in the Summer Land above."

I seemed to wake out of a dream, and these words appeared like letters of fire burning into my soul. A star-like light then sparkled before me, and in its dazzling brightness took the form of spirits who came to persuade me to use my best endeavours towards progress. My curiosity prompted me to ask them how much longer I would have to sojourn in this sphere, and if the sphere above, to which my wife had ascended, was heaven? "No," they answered, "it is not heaven, but it is a land like the one you are in, with this difference, that those who have crossed the silvery stream have not an earthly passion left."

Again the voice of my wife broke in on the mysterious quiet: "Wilt thou still tarry, dear husband? Wilt thou still look back? Canst thou not tear thy thoughts from those for whom thou hast heretofore had affinity?"

Digitized by Google

Anguish and remorse, horrible to contemplate, I then felt when my thoughts reverted to my earth life, where I had cultivated those passions which should have been allowed to remain dormant, where I had pursued every pleasure and forsaken her who was the star of my earthly and spiritual life—that pure being who was now influencing me with her love and beauty. I knelt, and, in tears of agonising grief, confessed my errors. I felt as if I could have no peace until the things she had desired were done. I then awoke from my trance, and perceived that I had not removed from the spot where the entrancement had possessed me.

I began to study how best I could do as she had counselled me, but I found, like a great number more, that time alone will bring experience—though some there are who gain little from it. Time, however, will impart knowledge, but it must be in conjunction with work—all must apply themselves to study for it. It is difficult to eradicate old habits and notions; they will creep at times even into the crevices of the spiritual faculties. I found the influence coming over me again, and a spirit approached, who thus spoke to me: "Friend! your couch is of roses, your pillow is of down. Come with me, and I will show you the path you have to tread. When once you have found it you will, perhaps, think it too simple, and will try to adorn it with greatness. It is, indeed, simple compared to the glorious reality of the highest spiritual sphere. Some there are who think it heaven, and do not, in consequence, care to pass on; but the richest of riches is the tree of knowledge; come with me, and I will soon lead you to it." He conducted me to a path, pointing along which he said: "If you follow this up you will find the gem you seek."

Along this path I trod, and soon reached a beautiful nook, where I discovered a circle of spiritual friends. Some looked old, while others wore youthful looks. Some were decked in garments of different kinds and colours. I observed that they

Digitized by Google

were trying to gain the victory over evil thoughts and passions. One stepped forward and said: "Here is a spirit who is in great need of the waters of eternal life. You have a copious quantity of it here. Give him a draught, but first present to him the mirror, and let him perceive his faults and imperfections; then teach him the paths of righteousness and truth, and when you have done this you can instil into him an earnestness of purpose which will enable him to keep in the right course.

Strip him of jealousy's mighty sway;
And teach him the part he has to play.

They then opened a glass, whose brightness and reflection resembles nothing of earth to which I can compare it; and I there saw my thoughts revealed in their blackest characters. Oh! beings of earth! If you could but see what I there saw you would strive with all the energy you possess to purge all uncleanliness from your souls My passions were there portrayed to me in such prominence that I almost despaired of ridding myself of them. I then spoke to the presiding spirit in these words:—"Oh! hasten to teach me; keep me as innocent as you can; to you will I give the keys of my heart, and I will place myself under your directions. Show me the beauties of Nature; show me everything that will impart to me knowledge; and also draw the line between yourself and me. Teach me how to develop the good qualities that are within me." After thus addressing him, I asked him when he lived upon earth. He said:—"I lived, as near as I can recollect, five or six hundred years ago upon that part of the earth termed Jerusalem. I passed away an aged Jew" "Then you have found the true religion?" I remarked. "Indeed, good friend," he returned, "I have seen the superstitions that are rampant in all earthly religions; they are mere folly; for what of reason have they on their side? Yet when I was young I shared in these superstitions; for, being a wealthy Jew, I

Digitized by Google

built a synagogue, though, in other respects I spent my money in a niggardly way. My greatest vices were avarice and selfishness; all my affections were centred upon gold—it was the god I adored."

This statement caused me some surprise; and thinking of this man's life it seemed to me that I was not so black as I once appeared to be; and yet, in that looking-glass my baneful qualities were represented so conspicuously that they seemed to be, as it were, seared into my soul. The Jew continued :—"When upon earth I was rather inclined to be what is termed a sceptic; but severe pains were inflicted upon those who expressed doubts, so I held my peace. Come and I will show you where many martyrs live who suffered for their religion and their God—the Father of us all, who does not bestow His blessings upon one, and withold them from another." I took the Jew by the hand, and said :—Let us cultivate the garden of the soul—the chaste and pure faculties. Let us try if we cannot awaken within us a fountain of love, to bring us under the influence of its simple beauty. There appears to me to be a chain of sympathy uniting us; let us travel together and try to reach the silvery shores which are yet far off. The nature that doth adorn this sphere is grand; but it suffers, we are told, by comparison to the supernal worlds, which are yet to be attained.

Awake, my soul! Awake, thou spirit, with a burning light and love! Stand upon the silvery beach of eternity and offer up thy love in praise and joy!

Oh! Thou great and Holy Being! Thou hast linked those who are pure in heart together, so that they can never more part. Thou hast bound soul in soul and spirit in spirit. Thou hast unlocked the mysteries of Nature. Thou hast given us the keys, whereby we may reach those who have passed away before us, and have left landmarks to tell us where they are. There is no such thing as separation among those that are pure, who are bound together in true affinity and love. Thy laws

Digitized by Google

are glorious to think of. 'Tis Thou who hast placed us in our present bright abode. The mighty hills seem to speak of Thee, and to lift up their heads in adoration to Thee. The laughing rivulets, and the sunny fields are all replete with gladness.

Thou loving, glorious Being! Shed abroad upon the hearts of mankind the beneficent light of truth; pour down Thy light upon those whom Thou hast placed here for a little while, and whom Thou wilt soon remove to scenes more fitting to their higher nature. Thou hast linked in the embrace of love and friendship, those that have passed away to those who still remain. Thou hast placed flowers, instead of thorns, in their way. Thy path, instead of being narrow as has been said, is as wide as the universe. None of Thy paths are narrow; nor dost Thou place traps that may create difficulties for any of Thy creatures Misconception and erroneous ideas have grown in minds, imputing to Thee a savage or barbaric feeling. Thou shinest with Thy love upon the uneducated and the poor, as Thou dost upon the rich and the educated. Then, Father of all Light—all Truth! We ask Thee not for Thy blessings; for they abound in everything—in every vein of Nature; in every scene we behold; but we ask Thee for Thy tender and loving forgiveness for all our shortcomings, and that we may look forward with hope to be nearer to Thee in goodness in Thy blessed realms hereafter. Good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XXVI.

DELIVERED 19TH MAY, 1875.

GOOD EVENING. In my last discourse I mentioned the fact of an affinity having been engendered within me towards the spiritual friend who had reciprocated that feeling. I shall now proceed to describe to you some circumstances which tended to cement our friendship.

He had preceded me to the spheres by many years of earthly time, and, consequently, his experience of them was far superior to that which I had acquired. He had led me by the hand through those beautiful scenes of which I made passing mention in the preceding lecture, and across which we traversed with exceedingly great speed. I was then taken to what appeared like and what you would term an immense town or city, but which we designate as an assembly of spirits, who are brought together by the natural ties of affinity or love. In the distance this vast assembly of spirits looked to me like a star does as seen from your earth—small at first, but growing larger as we drew near to it. A divine halo and a peculiar kind of beauty lingered around it, and a supreme quietness appeared to be a marked characteristic. I felt, in the vicinity of this gathering, a sensation of sweet repose, and was undisturbed by any of those annoying influences which, on your earth, unstring the nerves and make the heart sad.

I was drawn into this beautiful assemblage, and immediately we were surrounded by balls of light. My friend spoke to me: "Stand here, friend. You will not feel at home at first in these scenes; you will be a little uncomfortable for a time, but your usual genial mood will return to you after

Digitized by Google

the lapse of a brief period. It is invariably the case that every new comer finds himself disagreeably placed. The main desire which arises in such a one here is to try and cast away the remnant of the earthly passions which he has brought with him. Until this is effected there is no harmony with that one and those surrounding him, and he necessarily feels out of his sphere until the renascent process has been consummated. Every spirit has to pass through a similar experience ere he rises to a pure state. There is no such thing as jealousy among those who are prepared to go to the higher sphere, and those spirits who are not so prepared must bide their time until knowledge and thought have qualified them to enter the more elevated state." My friend also impressed me, by kind words, on other subjects He seemed to enter into my spiritual soul and impart to it tranquillity, and a feeling of serenity took the place of embarrassment.

No matter how dark the spirits are who sometimes visit earth, no matter what their characteristics may be, still there is a bright and brilliant spot in their hearts which no actions of their own or of others can wipe out; it rises supreme to all efforts to press it out. Many of those who have the darkest aura surrounding them have yet the inner lamp burning brightly—as much so as in those who appear to have more exterior brightness.

Oh! Thou great and loving Father! Thou hast encased the souls of thy children on earth in matter, yet at times they can feel Thy glorious part that is within them. Thou knowest the darkest shades of their characters, yet, as each one searches aright, he can perceive one ray of hope leading him nearer to Thee.

We were drawn along as gently as a boat is wafted by a summer breeze upon the placid waters of your planet. There was not the slightest exertion as we floated along, still the motion stirred within me a thrilling sensation never before

Digitized by Google

experienced by me. Presently the whole prospect before me was aglow with a golden light, the intense beauty and brightness of which cast a blindness over my spiritual sight. I said: "How is this, friend? I cannot see." "No," he returned, "you are not yet accustomed to the balmy air you will have to breathe; this is the first opportunity you have had of inhaling it." He then placed me under the magnetic influence, on awakening from which I found myself standing at the golden entrance to those glorious realms whose lovely light shed its effulgent radiance around. Everything within view seemed to speak to me as soft and beautiful music, awakening in my soul a feeling of joy and bliss. When I my vision downward turned I saw a wondrous nation, whose vast dominions exceeded anything of the kind yet seen by me. If, in your mind's eye, you can picture all the inhabitants of the earth assembled together in one locality, as a stationary community, you can form some idea of this great band of spirits. for the number of the assembly I witnessed is approximately comparable to the one I ask you to view in imagination. The streets or thoroughfares of the large city in view were proportionately broad. There appeared not the slightest irregularity; everything looked to me to be in perfect order, and there was a sweeping grandeur over the whole which almost overwhelmed me. My friend placed his hand upon me, for he perceived that I was losing consciousness, and that my visionary powers were fast gaining the ascendancy on me. The rapturous scene was too much for my strength—too sublime for my uncultured spirit. Like many or most men I had often built castles in the air, and had had them as often demolished, which caused me to accustom myself to that mode or line of thought that made me not to reckon on anything until I actually possessed or knew it. This is one of the most important things a spirit has to learn. You, in your earthly condition, are always planning and building castles in the air; most of you are, as the saying has it, looking

Digitized by Google

before you. Now spirits neither reckon the time beyond them, nor are they taught to glance back on the time they have passed. It is in the spirit-world that the pages of Nature's volume are thrown open, and the heretofore hidden secrets of your heart and soul are made manifest to your wondering sight. Our brothers and sisters, in their daily rambles in the etherealized world, can penetrate with ease the arcana of Nature. They search out her beauties with a loving and reverent study, as does a good mother, when she teaches her child to speak; as she does when she watches with interest the growth and expansion of the human frame; as she sees the head becoming gradually covered with the adornment which kind Nature provides. It is the same with the spirits here watching each other; and any remarks of old rooted foibles that still linger in the spiritual system of a brother or sister, are gently pointed out, and a method suggested by which they can rid themselves of these. There are spirits who are more especially qualified for such a purifying task, and those spirits are redolent with love, ever on the alert to benefit and elevate those on a lower plane than themselves. You, upon earth, have little opportunity of emulating such gracious work; because he who has done an evil thing possesses a material coating or veil of flesh round about him to aid in secreting it.

No matter how great and good the soul of man may be, still he has not the same advantage as those in the future state, when the soul that burns within the spiritual being is deciphered as readily as the clearest type. With man on earth you know not what thoughts or actions he may be guilty of; the knowledge of heinous deeds may be secreted in his breast, though in the eyes of the world he may appear a saint. It is not so on the other side. There the curtain is withdrawn, hypocrisy becomes transparent, and the spirit finds itself in a more crystalline condition, yet still the same individual which his thoughts and acts on earth have made him.

Digitized by Google

My friend took me by the hand, and led me down one of the main thoroughfares. It appeared to me that the houses and all that appertained to the city had been constructed countless ages agone. Nothing that met my gaze could be said to be of a gaudy or tinsel appearance; everything was chaste and pleasant to look upon. The trees which bordered each side of the thoroughfares were stately and majestic; they extended their heads to a great elevation, and their foliage emitted the sweetest fragrance. Flowers twined around their trunks, and extended their embrace to the topmost branches, where they shared their perfume with the leaves. These flowers needed no guiding hands to train or cherish them, for they attained a state of perfection by the inherent powers of Nature within each. In the streets, at short intervals, were beautiful fountains. from which flowed limpid streams of crystal brilliancy, and at one side of the mighty city was a grove, from whence came the murmuring sound of rippling waters, mingling with the chant of young and tender voices.

My guide still led me onwards, gently pushing the flowers aside in his advance. At the borders of the grove we halted, and he requested me to look beyond, pointing at the same time to the distance in front. Oh! joyous sight! Would that I could impart to you an idea of the sensation that then thrilled through me, when I beheld millions of young and tender children animated by all the spiritual vitality pertaining to youth in that elevated grade. I heard their music uniting harmoniously with that of the rippling streams, producing dulcet sounds of exquisite tenderness and pleasure. The delightful prattling sounds from the voices of these myriads of young ones were borne far away and wafted back by the balmy breezes in countless echoes, creating in me a desire to stand in the midst of those happy children. While viewing them with such a desire strong upon me I perceived

Digitized by Google

two among the vast crowd who clung together, and appeared inseparable Ah! well I knew them; they were mine—yes, mine. Some time had elapsed since I had been gratified by a sight of them, and in that interval they had grown in stature, and had become far more handsome and splendid than when I last beheld them. They were adorned, however, by a simplicity and unadulterated innocence that portrayed the absence of earthly taint. My friend beckoned to them, and they gracefully glided towards us in such a manner as to indicate that an unseen power drew them on, a secret force of Nature which is as yet incomprehensible to the most learned of earth. Having approached me I felt a longing to grasp in my arms those who were so near and dear to me. My vision of those lovely innocents was, however, but momentarily gratified, for the next instant they glided from me and were swept from my sight. Once again all seemed dreary and cold; a feeling of misery again took hold of me, succeeded by an absence of all boisterous passions. I was told that these children were shown to me for the purpose of encouraging the hope of being again re-united; that there was no fear of eternal separation.

(A sudden pause here occurred, followed by an interval of about fifteen minutes—during which the Medium returned to his normal state.

On resuming, it was said):—I was again addressed by my companion, "Why dost thou pander to thy earthly selfishness to attempt to clutch that which thou art not yet worthy to embrace? It is not here in this sphere or grade that such you may do; for the present while you behold everything that comes within the powers of your observation, I wish you at the same time to repress all selfish emotions that may arise in your breast. When the time arrives in which you will feel the soul-impressing power urging you to be drawn, by the ties of goodness and purity, to the beings you love, then you can

Digitized by Google

resume association with them. Because I brought you to this grove where you saw your children, your impulsive influence flattered you that a re-union was at once to be consummated. A parent's love, I know, is great indeed; but these imprudent impulses, friend, you must, henceforth, restrain. And now I will introduce you to a certain grade of spirits who will quickly teach you to curb those desires which are still rampant within you. You cannot, I perceive, understand why you are not allowed to retain that which you consider your own. Remember these words, and let them a motto be:—'Nought doth belong to you. He, the Ruler of us all, can alone claim sovereignty.' You cannot mix in the company of those who are above you; nor can you stand within their charmed and sacred circle." "But friend, oh! friend!" I cried, "where is the justice of the laws you speak of, which separates children from their father—that takes the wife from her husband? Canst thou tell me why such laws were made to restrain a spirit from joining those it loves? They tell me that those in the charmed circle are united in the bonds of affinity; yet no charmed circle has there been for me; canst thou tell me where to find such?" "Come with me," he said.

Quickly we sped forth until we came to a number of spirits, among whom I found myself very uncomfortable, or not in my element. (Now I wish that word element to be understood). Most people have suffered the feeling to which I allude. For instance, take one who has not been educated and place him among the educated, and you will find that there he is anything but comfortable. Introduce an unprincipled, dishonest man into the presence of a straightforward, honest one, who not only would not do a dishonourable act, but who would spurn even the very thought of such, the former would feel uncomfortable; he would not feel in affinity; he would be out of his element. Take the bigot whose mind has been cramped, and place him with the larger

Digitized by Google

minded man who seeks for truth and follows it where'er it leads. Is he comfortable? No, he cannot bear to look upon the searching eye and serene countenance of one whose faith is based on self-acquired knowledge. He wishes himself away from that company which he is unfit to associate with, the company of mental cowards like himself is more to his taste. I suffered all these sensations, aye, and far worse, for my spiritual faculties being higher developed, and my spirit in a clairvoyant state, I felt them more keenly, and not only felt them, but simultaneously knew the cause. I soon became aware that I could be seen through by those with whom I was in company. They were kind and gentle, yet they kept a firm pressure upon my passions. This restraint, to me, was at times hard to bear, but I was quiet, though the boisterous and extravagant faults that oft came o'er me upon earth would even still sometimes rise.

Before my first transformation—during my sojourn on the earth sphere—I had thought that when I reached the spiritual world I should easily rid myself of these weeds, but I found that I was obliged to lean upon those who had imbibed the knowledge which I sought. I found that I could not travel here as I had done in the lower spheres. At length I determined to know what oft I had thought about. I, therefore, accosted a spirit thus: "Gracious spirit! Such a check is kept upon me that my soul famishes, my spirit sinks, my form grows languid. Canst thou not arouse within me a power that I may be enabled to know my destiny? Canst thou not? Wilt thou not? Tell me quickly; for suspense drives me to such a state that I feel I could depart anywhere to get out of the sight of those who I know are purer than I am. It has been told me that it is only in time that I can elevate myself to that state which you now enjoy. Oh! pour upon me the waters of spiritual life, open out my faculties, tear out the unworthy passions that still adhere to me, show

Digitized by Google

me the road I have to travel." With the mildest of voices he said: "Friend, oh! friend! Hard, it appears, you have tried, hard you have contended, but yet you have much to learn. Your roaming, rambling spiritual existence, has developed in you many powers, but the fire within you that should have been extinguished is not yet quenched. I will aid you to open out your spiritual faculties, and will display to your visional powers that which is in store for you. You ask to know the existence that you will have to lead. Your life upon this sphere will be one of trial. You are just upon the precincts of the Summer Land, before your advent to which you must purify yourself thoroughly. Those who have gone before you have left beacons which will light you onward. You are now like a flower that is crushed by the weeds; you cannot, without an effort, lift your head; you are flushed with expectations which agitate your soul and restrain its expansion. You see around you friends of a different kind to those with whom you have been in the habit of associating. Many, or most of us you now see, were tinctured with defects or faults which, to relate to you, would cause you almost to blush; yet we have weeded them, one by one away." He further told me that I should soon have a cluster of my own friends around me. I then fell into a trance state, and my faculties became enlarged, my memory reverting o'er centuries of time. I heard the echo reverberate from "the dead," but who still lived—those who had been gentle and kind to me—I saw my good star,* who seemed to throw brightness and goodness around, drawing all within the radius of her benign influence by the bonds of purity and truth.

When I emerged from the trance or magnetic sleep I found myself surrounded by many spirits. "It is our wish and intention," they said to me, "to take you with us." I was

* His wife.

Digitized by Google

then led away, to be taught my first lesson in this grade, to a large temple, or what upon earth would be termed a church or chapel, but differing therefrom both in extent and in many other respects. In size it was four-fold that of the most extensive building to be found on the terrestrial sphere; and was built of a material resembling beautifully white stone, which reflected or threw out a lovely, lucid light. The sides of this building were constructed, so that its vast space might be thoroughly ventilated. It was surrounded by rich and handsome pillars, carved into beautiful forms and shapes, and these were further enlivened by a lovely tint of green, which on a near view, I ascertained to consist of a delicate plant, which had encircled these pillars, and formed itself into symmetrical curves. From the summit of these pillars were suspended curtains of the most elegant description, falling on the inner side of the pillars, thus taking the usual place of walls.

My friend now said to me:—"In the course of a little time you will see spirits who have come from the higher spheres, and you will be enabled to compare their demeanour and attributes with the purest of spirits whom you have yet seen." He then compared man to a child. "Man," he said, "has become so presumptuous that he imagines he has nought to learn; but mankind are all children in the vast ocean of space. They are children until they have passed and gone far beyond those realms whence they can return to earth. Until they have reached that far distant period of time they will have to be taught as children. It is not by any violent exertion that they can gain the requisite knowledge to further their progress; but it must and will be by easy gradations that *that* progress is effected. As the child, in its first attempts to walk, meets with many downfalls, so man, in his aspirations, has to contend with numerous obstacles, which frequently, for a time, retard his advance; but the principles of progression, like those of Truth, are ever triumphant. Judging man by the fantastic freaks

Digitized by Google

which he perpetrates during his earthly career, it would seem that he deems himself placed there for the sole purpose of showing himself off—of attracting the attention and admiration of his fellows. Whereas he has been placed there, in accordance with Nature's unerring laws, to exercise the good gifts which have been bestowed upon him, and to leave their indelible marks upon the archives of time."

I had not long entered the temple when a symphonious peal from a thousand harps filled the space of the great building with its volume of harmonious sound. Simultaneously with the first notes from the harps, there began to congregate a host of spirits into this vast temple, which rapidly became filled; but beyond the pillars, the curtains of which were now drawn up, there could be seen, outside the building, myriads of spirits who came flocking from all parts of this expansive sphere; the whole atmosphere seemed to me animated with life. 'Twas a transcendently glorious scene, utterly impossible for words to delineate. By such paths, and through similar scenes, each of you will have to tread. Of this temple I will discourse on another evening.

Oh! Deity: beneficent Father of all Thy creatures! Shed abroad, we invoke Thee, upon the hearts of mankind, the impress of Thy overflowing love, that they, in their onward march of progress, aspiring to Thy sublime purity, may bask in its Light for ever. Good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XXVII.

DELIVERED 23RD MAY, 1875.

EXPAND your thoughts and minds. Encourage a thirst for knowledge. Allow not that thirst to be quenched, and elevate your souls, your inward spirit, to Him, the fountain of all knowledge.

Oh! reality. Oh! truth. Words cannot be brought to explain the joy that stirs within each spiritual heart and soul when they behold and feel Thy great and mighty goodness. Many there have been who, when first ushered into spiritual life, were amazed, and felt in a state of mind bordering upon distraction to think that they had so misjudged Thee; that they had deemed Thee an avenging Deity, in lieu of, as Thou art, a God of Love Justice, and Mercy.

Watch ye! Oh! watch ye, my friends; and as ye are called, and gently placed upon these spiritual shores, think of Deity in His real paternal character—a God of goodness, justice, wisdom, and power. Upon your brows is stamped His finger. In your souls are drops from His fountain of eternal life. Oh! how happy each one should be to know that His divine image is within, that His voice is ever speaking to all.

At the termination of my last discourse I was describing the vast assembly in and around the temple. I spoke of the curtains having been up drawn, when the sight I beheld was one of amazing beauty, inducing a feeling of reverence and love. Within the temple I observed a class of spirits I had not before beheld. They were from the Summer Land, and it is

Digitized by Google

needless to say that they looked bright and pure. They did not use the speaking powers as you do, but each one communicated his ideas to the one he wished to converse with by thoughts. Being in such intense harmony they were so united by the chords of affinity that the organs of speech were not requisite for the interchange of thoughts, which were visible in their countenances, where could be perceived the high tone of feeling which actuated their souls. They were robed in garments of blue—garments that were devoid of all pompous or showy appearance.

I was drawn towards a knot of spirits much of the same turn of mind as myself, to whom I asked what was intended by this assembly. They replied: "Many of the spirits you see here are from the higher spheres, from whence they come regularly to instruct us upon questions that are abstruse to our minds. When the meeting is opened those spirits will occupy the space which is elevated above the rest, and then they will be able to answer questions put to them for the benefit of all. You will now have an opportunity of eliciting information concerning your steps into futurity—you can be enlightened as to the next sphere you have to enter, and not be ushered therein in a state of ignorance, as was the case when you had emerged from the physical scaffolding through the process called death, prior to which there was nothing of a reasonable character given to you as a proof that could enlighten you as to the journey that lay before you in brighter spheres Here it is different. You are shown so plainly that you cannot make any mistake." After I had been initiated into these matters I heard soft music, unutterably soothing and delightful to my sense of hearing. It was a harmony of dulcet sounds destitute of the slightest harshness, and there followed a soul-stirring address, in which were no despicable appeals to God for mercy—no heartrending cries to be saved from the just effects of wrongs committed.

Digitized by Google

I asked my friends how it was, if these spirits were from the higher spheres, that they looked so young. "Because," they answered, "once the border of the Summer Land is passed, the old and jaded appearance engendered through earthly taints begins to wear off as a natural sequence to the new spiritual existence. There the soul still continues to expand, the spiritual powers to become more developed and sympathetic, and the feelings attain an elevation not hitherto conceived of. The denizens of that purer sphere have assumed more youthful looks by the influence and power of enlightenment, and their minds will continue to expand, causing them to rise higher and higher both in beauty and in spiritual majesty. All this, no doubt, appears strange to you, having probably received no intimation of such a state of things. Some of these have been thousands of years in the spheres, and yet, as you see, they bear youthful looks! They are not made of earthly clay, but are spiritualised after God's everlasting likeness. There is nothing about them that can fade, for they have been stripped of all earthly taints. They appear in their native simplicity, and their souls are engrossed with love and reverence for the Being that gave them birth. They are drawn naturally towards the Divine Source of their being, because there are now no opposing forces to work against such a tendency. Nearer are they drawing towards the Great Spirit of all life—the Divine Fountain of all love. A yet finer and more beautiful condition will be the outcome of a further prolonged existence, for continued spiritual culture generates the most sublime sentiments. With them there is nothing overbearing or domineering. You can feel a soothing and uplifting influence from the sweet softness of their language, and perceive love imprinted upon their brows. You can see tenderness and sympathy sparkle from their eyes."

For a moment the same enchanting music again pealed, and then one of the spirits from the Summer Land arose and spoke

Digitized by Google

in these words to the assembled hosts :—" Spirits ! we are gathered here from various grades—some are from those spheres where I once sojourned—some are from the Summer Land, where countless numbers of spiritual children dwell in harmony and in true affinity. Here are congregated friends some of whom have not seen each other since they parted on the earthly plane of life. Here the spirit reaches a sphere where it can enter into conversation with those of a higher state. I wish particularly to impress this on your minds. Do not for a moment think that there is only one grade here ; for there are inhabitants from many spheres gathered together, drawn by affinity for each other in love, in goodness, and in truth."

After the lapse of a short time—during which the spiritual atmosphere resounded with vocal strains from the myriads present chanting songs of glad thanksgiving—the same spirit spoke in these words :—" Friends ! I have come from higher lands, and as I look towards the earth, where once we sojourned, rugged paths I see marked out. A crisis in religion, philosophy, and education, such as I ne'er did see before, will ere long be brought about. Concerning creeds and dogmas each one now disputes with the other, causing disturbances not only in the churches, but also between sisters and brothers. The power of thought is now arousing those who have long been sleeping. As I stand addressing you thousands of voices seem to ascend from that little star called earth. It is a proud moment for me, for I have been deputed to point out a path by which the children of earth can be benefited ; and not these alone, but yourselves also, for in defining that path to the benighted, all will be elevated. Many of you here have some dear friends or relations residing on the earth-sphere, who are waiting to hear from those they loved, and who still cling to them so dearly in memory. That light which has so long been obscured through priestly machinations, is about to dawn

Digitized by Google

upon that world. Those of you here who have been slumbering must now awake and step forth to those sorrowing souls on earth, and ignite within them a thirst for such knowledge as will lead them to ascertain THE GRAND REALITY regarding those whom they have mourned as dead. Teach mankind THE HOLY TRUTH, which, when once understood and embraced, will blend them together as one mighty brotherhood, and thereby usher in an era of universal and everlasting peace and unity. From hence to earth we must place a ladder by which those who will may climb. What we have to do is to encourage those of sympathetic natures to develop their spiritual faculties; to teach all that the surrender of the God-like gift of reason is to dishonour the Divine Giver thereof, and to stigmatize themselves; that it is absolutely essential to their well-being that they should investigate every assertion which has been or is advanced as truth. No more priestly dogmatism must they imbibe; but the sparkling fountain of everlasting truth must pour down upon the earth, so that they can freely drink of its pearly stream Each one, no matter how high, or how low his state upon that earth may be, must be touched by our influence, and thus his dormant, spiritual faculties be aroused. Those among you who are prone to sluggishness, must bestir yourselves, and assist to instil into the minds of humanity the soul-stirring fact that there is a higher life in eternity! Invoke the aid of all your energies. Let an everflowing stream of love pour down upon those who have yet to follow us. Let us all unite our powers hand in hand; for, where there is not unity, little can be achieved. Spiritual manifestations, except in isolated cases, have ceased among mankind, who, as a whole, are loitering on the path of spiritual progress. Over the world, where once we dwelt for a brief space; over that world, the primitive abode of many here, are spread the wings of infidelity; the expulsion of which is a portion of the work you have to effect. Let us hold frequent meetings, so that each one, as he advances with

Digitized by Google

the work in hand, can report progress. We are not like those upon earth to whom each minute is of earnest import. Time, although of value to us, is not so momentous here as it is to those who are yet incased in the physical structure; for we know we have eternity before us; we have passed beyond that sphere where, in the cultivation of our endowments, every moment of time was precious. Therefore, let us spare neither time nor labour in performing the work appointed us. The dark streams of life on earth have flowed onward until they have merged in the waters of infidelity, under whose flag too many of the human race are marching. Manifestations of a spiritual nature were performed during the ages that are past; but the vile hearts of those in authority inflicted tortures on the innocent heads of those who were the recipients of such manifestations; and those manifestations — which were the outcome of the spiritual world—ceased, in order to save men from such terrible persecution. Now is the time. As the darkened waters are running in angry floods let us mount upon their crests, and try to brighten their inky hue. Let us establish a religion of deeds, not creeds, whose motto shall be brotherly love for one and all. Let us encourage each one to exercise his spiritual faculties, and also the outpouring of the heart in communion with one another. This is the religion that we wish to see and to consummate, by the exercise of which we must break down the barriers that debar mankind access to a knowledge of spiritual and eternal truths. Exterminate the barriers which ecclesiasticism has raised, and man will be induced to give up the priestly superstitions of the ignorant past and accept in their place the divine revelations of Nature, which ever invite all to investigate freely their truth and their reality. Such a religion requireth not the decorations of human ingenuity to impart to it intrinsic worth, or to make it acceptable to God, for the worshippers in spirit and in truth, at the shrine of such a

Digitized by Google

religion, will of necessity be drawn towards Him, the ever living Fountain of practical love."

This speech fired the whole of my being. My heart was full to overflowing. All the lukewarmness of my nature seemed to have been expelled. I mentally vowed that along that path, which had been pointed out, I would retrace my steps to earth and exercise that newly-acquired power. With throbbings of an agitated nature beating in my breast I was attracted by love towards the speaker, who again said: "Questions I am willing now to answer." The greatest question that arose in my thoughts was, whether those who came from higher spheres had seen Deity? I was about to put the question, when one of those near me said: "Oh! spirit! who from the boundless lands doth come, robed in beauty and glory, who hath long trod the spiritual spheres, a question doth puzzle us, and as you have encouraged us we will ask it: 'Have you seen God? and is He a Being like yourself?'" "Deity," he returned, "is almost too gloriously transcendent to speak or even think of. The thoughts you should cherish of Him should be worthy of the divine gift of intelligence in you, which emanates from Him, the universal Fountain of all Light, Life, and Intelligence, worthy of a God of Infinite Love, Truth, Justice and Wisdom. Though long many of you have traversed the spheres, such time is brief compared to that during which I have enjoyed existence in the spirit-world, and yet Deity have I not seen. Higher and higher did I ascend through His vast realms, and vainly cherished the hope of beholding Him, but I saw Him not; and yet He surrounds us continually, and permeates everything throughout universal Nature, yea, everything, both in His physical and spiritual domains. The Author of our being is not located in one portion of His mighty realms, neither is He robed in garments that will dazzle your spiritual eye. He is everywhere present, and everything speaks of His divine

Digitized by Google

presence." "And doth Deity speak to the soul in no other manner than this you mention?" I enquired. "He only speaks by His works, gentle friend," was the response. "He appeals to both men and spirits through His works. The scenes of grandeur you have witnessed fade in comparison to those which have gratified my vision in the realms beyond, whose glories I cannot now attempt to delineate. You will see them all in time with glowing eyes, and you will then the better comprehend the attributes of Deity." "Is it right, then, to worship Him?" I asked. "Yes, but not in the unworthy manner taught you on earth. There is but one way to worship Him aright, and that is by unselfish acts, with pure and noble thoughts, and holy aspirations, without which you utterly fail in your devotions to that Infinite and Immaculate Being. He cannot be worshipped by the fleshly body, neither by the spiritual form—the soul, which is an emanation from His divine nature, can alone worship God. It is from this divine infusion that you derive the power to think, to study, to penetrate to a knowledge of the works of Nature, and to feel that you are a spirit living and moving upon this sphere." "Are His blessings as great as have been stated?" was next asked by another present. "His blessings are manifest within your being; for has He not blessed you by bringing you to the state which you now enjoy? My soul elevates itself with joyful praise as I behold His gracious and tender mercies. My soul expands when I contemplate His boundless power and His infinite wisdom. My soul in an ecstasy of gratitude exults when I gaze on the star-spangled Universe, and read in those works His everlasting truth. My soul expands as I feel my Maker's love. 'Tis upon such food that the soul delights to feed; for it is needful to its healthful existence. The soul, encircled by a halo of glory, can no longer fettered be, as it joins with myriads more in earnest thanksgiving to the Great Father of all."

Digitized by Google

I have been able only to give you a slight idea of what this bright spirit said, but I am governed by circumstances, and can only do my best. I thought I had ne'er heard such language from spiritual lips before. While he continued speaking all creation seemed hushed; the very birds and animals seemed entranced by the melodious voice and eloquence to which so numerous an assembly had listened with such wrapt attention. He afterwards proceeded to ask us whether there were any other subjects upon which we were desirous of being enlightened. It was my turn to put a question; but I was unable to do so, as I wished. One of my friends, therefore, asked for me:—"Can you, in a few words, instruct us concerning the soul?" He again rose, and with a lovely light beaming from his eyes, thus spoke: "There are three distinct parts of man. There is the earthly frame, the spirit, and the soul. These three are intended by their Author to run in harmony, but so long as the flesh wars against the spirit, and the spirit against the soul, there cannot be harmony. The flesh is the coating or covering of both spirit and soul; it is fashioned by means of the various spiritual organs within. The spiritual body or spirit is gradually developed by natural growth, and is the enduring casket of the divine spark within. The soul is the prime mover of the faculties within the two. That deific essence, the soul, like a jewel rare, is concealed, so that it shall be intact, unblemished by pollution. Soul is the grand motive power of everything." I then asked: "Can the soul reach to a state of perfection!" He answered: "Neither spirit nor soul can attain perfection; but they may ever progress—ever develop, and ever behold and appreciate new beauties. Spirit and soul may attain to thorough harmony—glorifying everything they come in contact with, yet ever animated by a longing to know more." I then saw that he was about concluding, and I thought that on the dispersion of the immense assembly I should at length see the line between us and the

Digitized by Google

Summer Land. Before we separated it was intimated to us that our presence would, ere long, be again required in that temple, and I cherished the hope that, at the next meeting of the association, I should be better qualified to take a more prominent part in its details; for I felt myself sympathizing, heart and soul, in the objects which it contemplated effecting. I was drawn to this work, not by a sense of duty, or as a matter of form, as is the case, too often, in earthly affairs; but by an attraction which was intensely pleasing to me.

The presiding spirit again addressed himself to the dense throng prior to breaking up the meeting. "Friends!" he said, "Let us go; and may each bear in his heart a desire for the mingling and blending of his thoughts with those by whom he is surrounded. Soon the light of Truth will burst through the dark clouds of superstition, and then earth and spheres will be blended in one. I have a desire to rise in ecstatic language to tell you of that time when the people of earth, of different nations and opinions, shall be brought together to act in unity —when a rumbling on the earth shall be heard and spiritual manifestations shall o'erspread all lands. Friends! 'the dead,' as we know, are not dead! The spirit does not slumber! The soul never sleeps! Soon on earth the bright and dazzling sun of Truth shall arise in all his splendour! Let the people be awakened to such a state that they may perceive, through this glorious light, the inherent qualities of their beings, and be thereby enabled to cultivate their powers, when innumerable blessings will attend them. Let them be made aware how happy is he who steps from earth to the future existence hand in hand with Nature's works! Blest, Oh! blest are we, far beyond our spiritual expectations, to find such soul-engrossing powers within us! May the great love-inspiring power of the spirit seek out and animate each one here; and may that mighty sun of Truth by his golden light scatter the mists of unbelief on earth, and illumine every heart."

Digitized by Google

Music then began softly to play; and each spirit, with a hand upon his head, moved away, like a fleecy cloud, out of sight. The warbling of the birds and the music of the silvery waters, as they rippled in their course, together with the soft and gentle music from the spirit band, all combined to create one grand song of approbation at the sentiments expressed. Even the towering hills, as they pointed far away into the vast distance, which no man can comprehend, seemed silently to testify their approval of what the speaker had said, and to exult in the blissful prospects thereby foreshadowed for the denizens of earth. Good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XXVIII.

DELIVERED 12TH JUNE, 1875.

GOOD EVENING, FRIENDS. I am happy to see and to greet you once again.*

It is my intention this evening to depict to you ground upon which my feet had not heretofore pressed, and o'er which I had never previously cast my spiritual eyesight. It is beautiful to behold; it is lovely in the splendour of Nature's works which adorn it. When first viewed by the spiritual eyesight it reminds one of a beautiful garden—a garden, however, which has been entrusted largely to Nature's tending—a tending which has imparted an aspect at once weird and lovely. The vegetation and the flowers are redolent with intelligence, and appear to speak to the onlooker in language hitherto unknown to him. The prospect around, when the spirit has distinctly seen it, rivets him with a soul-engrossing power and by an attraction which are past words to describe. It transmits through him an exquisite stream of light, of truth, of beauty.

It was here where our most noble brother, who is called Redeemer by many, shed forth his most brilliant light. There is no mystery here; there have been no men's hands tampering with the truths he taught, truths that are the pure essence and outpourings of the spirit's whole soul—untainted, unadulterated by false teaching or compulsion, truths that have not been contaminated by man's cunning devices. They have not been brought to an artificial standard, but they

* Owing to the Medium being unwell the circle had not met for some weeks, hence this remark by the lecturer.

Digitized by Google

flourish here as the wild flowers do on your earth; and it is only in these places—in these spheres—in these grades, that you can drink of the purity and fragrance of the plant. The truths Jesus once taught upon earth soon became distorted and garnished by unprincipled men, and then these distorted truths were set in gilded frames, thus being made to assume a meretricious state, to attract the physical eye, which too long has been fascinated by the mystical appearances that a designing priestcraft have added to what has been, and still is, erroneously designated as religion.

If those who call Jesus redeemer were to behold their elder brother treading upon their footpaths and their highways to-day, as he did those of Palestine of yore, they would, if they noticed him at all, call upon him and expect him to associate with and follow them in their dogmatical precepts. But he, with his truthfulness, and his high standard of kindness and gentleness—having been humble in his nature and humble in his soul—drinking with delight from the works of the Father, and associating or blending his mind and soul with those who were seeking spiritual truth, might more reasonably be expected to associate and sympathize with those approximating to his own standard, not of purity, but in simpleness and truthfulness of nature.

Imagine within yourselves the beautiful sight, the glorious feelings, the inspired movements you would experience, were you to stand upon those silvery shores, which now you, who have the simple truth, *know for a certainty* you will do in the future There the lustre and adornments of Jesus' teachings have remained untarnished, appearing now as radiant as the sun's unclouded beams. Upon these very shores where he stood, upon these very grounds associated with reminiscences of the humble yet noble Nazarine, imagine yourselves being placed. What would be your feelings, the soul-engrossing thoughts that would animate you? They would lead you to

Digitized by Google

trace centuries back—to a period remote in bygone times—to an epoch in the world's history, when a man, whose equal lived not, who, struggled nobly for the redemption of his fellow man from gross superstition, and whose immediate reward by the religionists of the day was a cruel death. Thus mentally placing yourselves, you can almost imagine that you are surrounded by the mouldering memorials of that cruel time, when this peerless man trod the earth, the man whose simple and yet majestic presence might almost be supposed to cast a halo of delight—a glorious inspiration, among the flowers and foliage that surrounded him.

I will now draw your attention more closely to his teachings, by which you can separate the weeds from the flowers, the dross from the gems, cutting out those diamonds of truth which will ever remain as bright as the sun whose light is incessantly flooding the earth upon which you exist.

When sojourning upon this globe, where his sublime teachings met with such a cruel reward, Jesus manifested so much quietness and purity, and seemed to be blessed with a tranquillity of nature which no man could disturb; yet in some portions of the history, as extant, he is spoken of as having exhibited a few of the unworthy attributes of human nature. For this exposition of one phase of his character, you have merely the evidence of words impressed in a book which comes to you with only the prestige of antiquity to recommend it. He was such a glorious man, so replete with truth and love, that such weaknesses, as are there recorded of him, appear incredible. Even associating these foibles with his character, he yet stands out pre-eminently before you as one worthy of imitation in many things; and his example helps you to bear those trials and troubles which hang around you. The noble attitude he consistently maintained in that ignorant and cruel era elevates him on a pedestal as a man not to be worshipped, but to be copied as far as possible in all his noble acts.

Digitized by Google

When first upon these sacred lands I stood, amidst the sweet fragrance of flowers, with the trees refulgent with their glorious light and sending out a spontaneous brightness, my thoughts reverted to that eminent soul whose footsteps once had trod this glade ere he passed to higher spheres. The reminiscences engendered within me a feeling akin to solemn awe ; and it was not until my attention was directed otherwise, that *that* feeling of solemnity was banished from my mind. In the distance I beheld, from where I stood, a mountain, on whose summit was raised a castle, whose height, even as viewed from that distant point, seemed great ! but which, when I had reached the base of the hill, appeared stupendous. I gained the summit ; and as I stood within the castle's domains, I was enabled by the aid of my psychometric powers to behold the hands that had erected it in its Gothic shapes and forms. From its tower was emitted a beautifully luminous light. The marble stones glistened with gems and rubies of costly price, or what would be deemed such by man ; and as I slowly paced these brilliant pavements I thought of those who ostensibly worshipped a worthy man as Deity or Saviour, and by might, force, or cruelty, have attempted to enforce upon others the necessity of so blaspheming God. With all the barbarity which was brought to aid their endeavours, they fortunately have signally failed to make their infamous idolatry universally accepted.

From the walls of this imposing castle were pendant flowers of the sweetest odour and most beautiful colours, suspended in graceful clusters, and arranged in such elegance that a romantic mind would be prone to imagine that myriads of fairy hands had been engaged in the task of entwining and cultivating them ; and as I meditatively gazed upon the florid scene, so resplendent with loveliness and grace, a feeling of worship was raised in my enraptured soul. While wandering over these ancestral halls I drew near to a gathering of spirits

Digitized by Google

who were addressed by one who, in some respects, bore no resemblance to any spirit I had yet seen. As the discourse, or rather the stream of knowledge which issued from his lips, may prove useful both to yourselves and others, I shall try and give a portion of it. But before doing so I would fain linger for a moment in an attempt to describe the effect wrought upon me by the appearance of the speaker, an appearance that may be briefly summed up as translucent in the extreme, so gloriously beautiful to look at that there were stirred within me sensations akin, in a certain sense, to those experienced by some of you when in contact with those of your fellows who are superior to you in their mental abilities. Some of you, perhaps, may not have felt this sensation, but I must say that, in my travels afar, o'er bright and gleaming lands, o'er oceans wild and foaming, and through spheres of different nations, I have ever found one who, by some power unknown, would, while attracting. impose yet a restraint upon me, and, by some mystic tie would, for the time being, blend my nature with that of his own; and when released I would break away like a butterfly that had been hovering around some glorious flower. Oft have I experienced this influence, strange as it may appear, and such occurrences invariably inspired me with the all-absorbing hope of a never-ending union with her who was as yet but as my star seen on a distant horizon.

(At this point of the discourse the Medium was released from the trance. After the lapse of twenty minutes the lecturer resumed) :—

The speaker, as I previously mentioned to you, riveted me, as it were, to the spot by a fascination which had never before been so intensified. A relief from this overpowering fascination was followed by my being drawn towards a certain group in the spacious hall; not a group bearing any similarity, as far as numbers are concerned, to a simple gregarious group

Digitized by Google

of an earthly audience, but such an one as is comprised by many thousands converging together, animated by one natural impulse and by one thought, with one desire implanted upon their spiritual minds, with an all-pervading thirst for something about which they were intensely desirous of gleaning authentic information, and for the realization of which they had assembled before this vast platform. The briefest possible way in which I can convey to you the immensity of the gathering here concentrated is to compare it to the collective assembly of the whole world to which you are at present bound. All those who were interested in a particular question, to be here advanced for solution, converged to this focus as volumes of water do to their level.

The speaker appeared to be cognisant of the motive which had prompted the congregation of the almost infinite numbers before him, for he immediately entered upon the subject which had agitated their minds : "I see around me countless numbers who wish to be enlightened upon a question which appears to trouble them, viz., the darker spirits. In adverting to this subject I can only follow in the footsteps of him who trod the same path before me. I cannot speak the language which he uttered, and it is possible that I may only ventilate sentiments which will correspond with your own ; sentiments which, it is reasonable to conjecture, may not be superseded until we reach those brighter lands where all do understand and cease to doubt. Even now doubt almost flies before me as I seek to open those intellectual capacities which I know for a certainty are within my being A laudable ambition animates my soul as I point to him whom you once worshipped as a God ! No doubts were allowed by him to bedim the lustre of his mind, and until you understand and venerate the laws of your spiritual being, as he did who manifested such kindness to all men, you must remain on the darker side of the spheres.

Digitized by Google

"It is needless to tell you that there is no one perfect save your Father, Who ruleth all things—Whom all things obey through the unerring laws by which He governs them. But the great question to which you desire an answer is, concerning the difference between those spirits who are termed dark and those who are called bright. List, oh! list, and heed my words. The form of him who now addresses you was once of a dark character. Sorrowful, and yet cheering thought!—to know that, from being an inhabitant of those darker realms, I have ascended, by natural gradations, to these brighter and more elevated regions. I have ascended from the darkest stages, from whence, by the same beneficent laws which favoured my ascension, all those who yet inhabit, and all who are destined yet to inhabit the darkest plane, can and will emerge eventually. In connection with these stages there are recorded upon the tablets of my memory scenes of the direst misery, which, to recount to you, would disturb your spiritual souls. Oh! then, my spirit brothers and sisters, unite, both in deed and in thought, for the elevation of those who are yet below us on the ladder of ascension. In the performance of such loving labour you will ensure a still higher ascension upon that ladder for yourselves. In those drear abodes referred to there are some who, by circumstances, are favoured more than others, as you are aware, in rising sooner to a higher state. There are others who are not cheered by such circumstances, who seem to have no thought, no soul, and who appear not to entertain the least thought upon their base surroundings. It is to these, my friends, who outwardly seem impervious to spiritual culture, that you will direct your energies, and make more equitable the circumstances which will stimulate those numberless denizens of the lower spheres to elevate themselves to brighter and happier abodes. Seek to expand and elevate their affections into universal love; and then, the results, like crystal waters, will irrigate the

Digitized by Google

garden of the soul, which will yield deathless flowers to shed immortal fragrance o'er the path of eternity.

"Remember that, however debased the being you meet in your labour of love may be, he is not wholly depraved, for there are none past hope, none who are debarred from rising to the brightest of celestial planes—no, not even he whose hand has been dipped in and dyed red with the blood of his fellows! Not even he who, with the blackest traits of character, has, in the earth-sphere, been dreaded by his neighbours, and, for his misdeeds, been incarcerated and shackled to stay his hand from perpetrating further harm. Even such as he may rise to be a partaker of God's blessings, for all are destined eventually to emit a light which will aid in glorifying their Maker. None are past redemption, for in our Father's realms are many spheres, and in those spheres are many planes, and in those planes are many grades of society." These remarks caused the following thoughts to come into my mind:—Is it not dreadful to think of the merciless doctrines still resounding from the pulpits of the earth-plane—of denunciatory utterances concerning the elect and the reprobate—promulgated as a cardinal portion of truth? What a pathway to mark out for man's eternal existence! And yet there are those who entertain such a debasing estimate of the Creator as to profess to believe it!—to believe that the Great Ruler of us all, to Whom the earth, compared with those mighty domains of His—is unfitted to become His footstool—has left countless numbers of His creatures out in the dark for eternity!—has left them so that they can never recover themselves! Well may the believers in such a blasphemous doctrine have become bewildered! The nature of such a doctrine, apart from its horrible indignity to the beneficent Father, is utterly antagonistic to the welfare and peaceful progress of mankind, to proselytise whom to the worship of a mere man of flesh and blood the self-constituted authorities of

Digitized by Google

a score and more of generations have caused portions of the earth to be saturated with the life-blood of millions of victims! To mark the difference between those who worship the sun and those who worship a man needs not the penetrating sight of clairvoyance or spiritual vision, and you who are free from bias or prejudice will readily concede that to worship a star which performs its duty with unerring precision is less idolatrous than the worship of a being who, like man, is weak and erring; for to prostrate oneself before the sublime works of Deity is not so culpable as to worship one who has given back to the elements all his fleshy parts—not a shadow or remnant of which is now visible to gratify the sight of these idolaters. The dogma that Jesus was God has swayed the nations of earth during a prolonged period; and that unnatural sway has caused the untimely severance of untold numbers of spirits from their mortal tenements. The transformation of Jesus into a Deity, and the worship of him as a God, neither spirit nor man can understand; the perpetuation of barbaric wars and strife engendered thereby has entailed upon the human race dire and inexplicable misery. Such are a few of the thoughts that then passed through my mind.

The speaker continued:—"Even in those who, by society, are outlawed for their misdeeds, there are the germs of flowers which, with cultivation, will one day flourish; but which now, clouded under the surface of flesh, are neglected. As yet they are not bright and glorious beings; but the soul-expressing power, now latent within them, is destined to make them so, and to lift them to higher spheres. In the realms of light they will see and learn, and read the lessons of Nature, and recognise her in her garb of truth. They, my friends, must tread the track or path of progress; and as the bee sips honey from the flower, so will they imbibe knowledge from the eternal fount. The human mind is so constructed that it cannot be driven,

Digitized by Google

but simply must be led. The higher demands which constantly arise must be developed, and in due time the soul's portals will expand and admit the entry of infinite love and eternal truth." He ceased, and it needed no prolonged glance over the immense audience to perceive that the utterances of the speaker had not been fruitless. Having tacitly expressed approbation at what they had heard, the hall was soon deserted by the assembled host.

Stationed upon that hill, whose atmosphere was lucid with a glorious brightness, my thoughts again reverted to earth—to that prolonged and blood-stained era, when monsters in humanity's guise, clothed in the garb of religion, perpetrated such atrocious murders in its sacred name. I thought of the strange and unjust distinction drawn between the murderer of the body, and he who, in destroying the body, would fain hope to have eternally extinguished or condemned the soul. For the first named a cruel and cold abhorrence was entertained by his fellow man; but for the other an obsequious, though enforced, respect welcomed his approach. The wretch who, in a moment of passion, had laid violent hands upon a brother or sister was quickly told to make his peace with his Maker, and then upon the gallows was he as quickly despatched—the vital spark that animated the physical form was summarily sent to its eternal home. But he who has premeditated and perpetrated cold-blooded murders in the name of God and religion has been applauded, and deemed worthy of a seat in heaven, whose gates, they assume, have been closed against the entry of the victims of their religious barbarities. To those victims, prior to their dismissal by a wretched death, all the horrors that a fertile imagination could picture of hell have been portrayed. According to those self-constituted disposers of the human family, the jaws of that huge bugbear, namely hell, have opened so wide as to have received a vast majority of the human race.

Digitized by Google

Heaven's luxuries have been dealt out by those self-made arbiters of fate in a manner somewhat similar to the coin of a miser in the cause of charity. Or, these heavenly luxuries have been grafted in the manner of apple-trees and pear-trees by those fairy hands, which have been blessed, they say, with ordinances and authority for so doing from on High!

On some other evening I will give you a picture of hell. I must now bid you good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XXIX.

DELIVERED 15TH JUNE, 1875.

GOOD EVENING. My last lecture I was compelled to conclude rather abruptly, when I intimated to you that I should dwell upon the subject of hell in another discourse—not, however, the one of this evening; for to-night I purpose making the attempt of realising to your minds a more beautifully quiet and passive scene, the influences of which shine forth and manifest their glory and light—their eternal brightness and the creative power of love—for all creatures, below and above. Then we will change the scene.

After having visited many parts of this sphere, I was drawn to a place which much resembled your earth in its natural appearance; but different in other respects. The buildings were of simple structure, yet withal of such a glorious appearance as to fervently impress my spiritual vision. Their luminous emission prevented the obtruding of any shadows or clouds, which are such prominent features on earth. Spirits whose eloquence and whose wisdom seemed to have been transmitted from the Fountain of intelligence, were here sojourning. It was a world, I may term it, surpassing description; a world whose cities appeared built upon stones of jasper and ingots of gold. It was there I was conducted by my friend, the old Jew, to whom I have before alluded. This newly-acquired companion and friend dwelt with me in consciousness, in soul, and in spiritual power.

As we approached one of these cities I observed that it was surrounded by a wall of great extent. It was a city which, the longer one gazed upon it, the larger did it seem to expand; and

Digitized by Google

from it there shone forth a light that illuminated an indefinite expanse.

When we gained access within the city, which we found no difficulty in doing, we beheld what you would designate as a festive gathering of all nations. I have intimated to you before that the soul engrossing attributes of love and affinity re-united in this sphere brothers and sisters who had been parted, perhaps hundreds of years before. Distinctions of country or nations also have here no dwelling. They are forgotten; the soul exists in harmony; the power of which is here omnipotent to cement an indelible union with those in affinity; a blending of all creeds and sects in one mighty circle was here conspicuous—a blending of *electric* accord upon which none could press the finger of disturbance.

I heard the sound of music; then ten thousand beings seemed to awake, and from their spiritual bowers to send forth a symphony to blend with the sweet melody of Nature. The foliage of the trees appeared to rustle under the influence of the music; the birds responded in a chorus of song. All was soft melody; Nature in her sweet and quiet garb, spoke with a voice and in language that none could fail to appreciate. The rocks seemed to acquiesce, the streams to murmur forth acclamations, and the heavens to open at the sound of that glorious music. The suns, the moons, the planets—all seemed to unite in harmony and acclaim to the Eternal Father. A pure and perfect white, interspersed with lines of a light blue colour, was the characteristic of this city, emblematic of love, tinged with pure and holy affections.

I was introduced to, and made acquainted with, many who from earth had long passed before me, and whose lives there had, for the most part, been anything but enviable—abbreviated accounts of whose deaths you may read in history. They had been loaded with shackles which had penetrated the flesh to the very bones! From some the finger nails had been

Digitized by Google

torn! From others eyes had been extracted or gouged! Think of these martyrs, oh! ye. who now enjoy liberty of worship, and be truly thankful that your lines have fallen in pleasant places.

One who had suffered the most exquisite of tortures that the cruel ingenuity of man could devise thus accosted me: "My friend, the form of him who now addresses you is, as you see, dressed in the purity of eternal day. My Father's hand seems to guide me with love and kindness. In me you behold the spiritual form of one who to the stake was bound with all the devilishness that man could bring to bear to try and stifle the glorious stream of life. Having long passed all earthly pains I now look upward to that mighty, ascending ladder, whose extent is unknown even to the most progressed spirit, and as there is an affinity between us we will ascend together the steps of progress which appear interminable. I am for ever free from those chains which corroded my fleshly form. The kindled faggot which destroyed my physical body hath not seared my spiritual brow. The form which is before you is, as you perceive, intact. Quickly my story I will tell you, and then to brighter scenes we will adjourn, chanting, hand in hand, pæans of praise to the Beneficent Deity. Wouldst like to know, dear friend, how I from earth's existence was severed? I passed with a sigh. Cruelty of the most extreme nature brought me to a rapid death, but not before tortures of the most excruciating kind had been inflicted upon me. All this was perpetrated in the name, and for the sake, of religion, because, inspired by higher evidences of eternal brightness, I could not accept that which mine enemies chose to thrust upon me. Quickly then was I waylaid and passed on to the torturing rack, and afterwards to the stake.

"Since that dreadful time oft have I seen the cruel monarch—the unrelenting queen—who sanctioned the murder

Digitized by Google

which robbed me of earth's existence, causing premature severance from my wife and children. But my piteous tale I will briefly tell you. To the dungeon's cell I was taken, where I was subjected to the most cruel torments. Those torments are, even at this distant day, awful to think of. But, friend, as you have never participated in anything of the kind, you cannot realise how difficult it is for a victim in such a position to strengthen his spirit whereby to enable him to bear the cruel trials. For many months was I kept in a loathsome dungeon, groaning under the weight of heavy fetters which, to place even upon one of the lower animals would, by any endowed with a spark of feeling, be deemed hideous cruelty. When this treatment was found to be fruitless in shaking my determination to abjure their vile faith, they placed me upon a structure that I could scarcely believe possible for man to invent, with all its horrible machinery. This, put in motion, tore the nails from my fingers and toes, and the blood, spouting from the wounds, seemed to appeal to the mercy of my persecutors; but it was of no avail, for—mercy, they had none. Mangled and bleeding I was borne to the stake, tied to which, before a yelling, maniacal crowd, the torch was applied to the faggots that surrounded me. The devouring flames soon enveloped my body, the flesh of which writhed and withered from the contact, but, except a moment's suffering, pain there was none; for—oh! joyful retrospection—spiritual sight was granted me, by which I perceived the presence of my father's spirit, a perception that seemed to nullify, on the instant, all painful effects, and thus I was unconscious of any horror pertaining to my death, or passage to eternity. Nature's course, when perverted thus, is generally terrible, but to me it was simple, indeed. Thus I passed from earthly life, and my spiritual friends bore me away. And now, friend, after that fiery ordeal my form bears no traces of those flames which released

Digitized by Google

the spirit—which appears before you as bright as the stars which beam with radiance upon us; and I now know and worship Him whom I loved and worshipped upon earth—a worship which was unadulterated by man's foul teachings. Since then I have been privileged to pass through those glorious realms that echo eternal anthems to Him who gave us being, and whose flowers bloom with a never-dying fragrance. Yes, friend, I, who was bound to the stake below, am now unfettered, and still worship that great and benificent Deity who rules over all."

This poor spirit's death was far from being so dreadful as I had anticipated. These spirits who had so suffered for truth's sake I admired exceedingly; and he who, like myself, lived upon earth in troublous times, could not avoid a lingering love for those who thus had been so inhumanly treated for their deathless love of truth. I—spirit as I am, who can soar from earth to ten thousand lands—do admire all earthly folks who endeavour to enkindle within the souls of others one spark of a desire to know on what worthless foundations their irrational and conflicting creeds rest. These priestly creeds were reared upon martyred forms—upon the bones of those whom the faggot's flames had turned into calcined dust—but whose spiritual frames rose unscathed in brightness and in truth, and whose souls have ascended nearer to the Giver of all good.

We travelled onward to another city with a speed inconceivable to man—with a velocity that would far out-distance the hurricane that sometimes devastates portions of your earth.

The morning wakes; the moon's pale light is eclipsed by the glory of the coming day. Eternal light reveals itself; sounds of music and singing of a celestial nature are wafted towards us; and he who has lain low—he that has been long afflicted is here re-united with those that have gone before—to a brother, a sister—a whole family. The unfathomable mysteries

Digitized by Google

of time seem to speak in a thousand languages, so brief and yet so true.

To picture to those still upon earth anything of the higher spheres it is necessary that something analogous to what their knowledge is conversant with should be advanced; for to go beyond this, however truthful statements may be, they are, for the most part, received with incredulity; everything must be measured according to what they know and have beheld. They cannot realise anything which they have not seen. Therefore, when they have conceived, or fancy they have conceived, the connection between spirit and matter they expect to be lifted forth at once into all its glories. How vain! If in portraying scenes in the lower spheres, language failed me to express their indescribable beauty, how much greater, I leave you to imagine, must be the difficulty experienced in trying to portray to your minds the more glorious scenes of the higher spheres.

I have heard the tuneful ripple of the quiet and deep brook. I have heard the birds carolling, in consonance with the rest of Nature's music, as if in appeal to man to draw him higher to the great Fountain of all. Thus ever doth Nature, with her soul-engrossing power, speak to the heart and soul of man who, alas! too often, is deaf to the appeal.

In that book termed the Bible, handed down to you with the prestige of antiquity as a recommendation, it is recorded that one, endowed with spiritual vision, described different parts of what he chose to designate as "heaven;" but which, in reality, were scenes in one of the lower spheres. To me, when I read the Bible upon earth, that account appeared such a stupendous fabrication, that I even passed it by as unworthy of re-perusal.

Let us here consider the statements of that biblical seer. He described the appearance of many beasts of a strange sort

Digitized by Google

and nondescript character, around what he deemed to be the Throne of that great Deity, who dwells in the dewdrop as well as in the greatest living thing.

(The Medium was here released from the trance state, and at the expiry of about twenty minutes a resumption of the discourse took place).

Open wide ye gates and pour forth thy radiant streams of light. Open, ye crystal gates, and let the multitude enter in. Shine forth, oh bright and brilliant orbs, that all upon this planet may see that there are other worlds in God's great Universe besides the earth on which they dwell. Speak, thou lightning, in thy voice of thunder—in that intoned voice which makes the heart of man to tremble, and which should direct his attention to the power and glory of his Maker. Swing open, ye gates, and let us in, to behold the new, the great, the grand Jerusalem. Let us see what all the prophets and sages of old have spoken of.

As I stepped within the borders surrounding another world or sphere, my visional powers expanded, and I beheld, ah! not seven suns, but what appeared millions of suns, whose light shone out with a sparkling and beaming lustre beyond my powers of description. Planets innumerable seemed to chase each other—not in wild confusion, but in well-arranged and regular order; and the combined emission of rays from all these transcendent globes, infused into my soul mingled sensations of wonder, awe and veneration; and my o'er fraught heart poured out in silence its gratitude to the Creator of all those mighty worlds; surveying which I deemed myself void of importance, and unworthy longer to live; and yet—pleasing, awful thought!—I knew I could never die!

As I entered this border-land I was met by a spirit, who thus addressed me:—"I will direct you to the tree of knowledge, whose leaves never wither—whose stem ne'er grows dry.

Digitized by Google

Seek diligently this tree of knowledge and love, whose limbs shoot forth in all creation; whose fruit is so ripe, so juicy, so sweet; fruit that, once tasted, is ever remembered." This stranger was clothed in a dress of Nature's symbols, which, at first appeared strange to me; but when being drawn gently within this border land, I suddenly found myself divested of my long-accustomed garb. I appeared there, however, as no beggar; no worn-out clothes invested my form; for Nature had benignly brought into requisition her softest adornments; flowers came and were arranged around me, until I perceived that I was decorated in a similar manner to those around me, My clothing was transformed into a garb that was in accord with my spiritual state of advancement.

The last spell seemed broken, and I was now fitted to dwell in Summer Land! Oh! land of Liberty and Love! Who would not undergo a short existence upon earth to enjoy thy resplendent glory?

A light now approached me, it appeared like a bright star. I watched intently as it came, and as it drew near it assumed the form of a spirit, hand in hand with her I loved so dearly. Then I felt a purifying power. I felt that I had reached a great and mighty sphere, from which I was free to roam o'er a thousand lands. I heard the music play sweetly, and every-one seemed united by golden links of love and friendship, which nought could sever. No joy could be compared to that moment when she stood before, and said: "I have come to receive you. Why linger? Why tarry? Cease repenting for the injury done. Come with me." And with a stroke of her clear, transparent hand, she opened my visional powers, and I beheld a land that surpassed in beauty all I had ever seen.

On entering this new sphere, I saw a numerous and happy social band. Sweet music appeared to rule the throng, amongst which I recognised my father, my mother, my sisters, my

Digitized by Google

brothers, and innumerable other relations, the bodies of some of whom had been deposited in the graves of earth generations before I lived upon it. I recognised them not by their forms, but they were made known to me by the subtle and mysterious influence of affinity. The great multitude greeted and welcomed me lovingly, and I quickly felt at home, as if amid a world of old and dearly cherished friends. With expressions of deep feeling my relations spoke of what they had gone through on earth and in the succeeding spheres; but all troubles were now over since they had attained the beautiful and sunny land, where no rules prevailed but those of love and kindness.

Oh! Fountain of Love! in Thy great goodness inspire not only these, but the whole of Thy creatures with a portion of that love which Thou dost bear to all. Awake within them a desire to know Thee—not in a personal or bodily form; but by a reverent study of Thy unerring laws. We desire not to call Thy special attention to us; because we are ever under Thy loving care and protection. Oh! Show us the paths we should tread, and enable us to point them out to others. Animate all with the desire to tear out the selfish passions from their breasts. Teach all, Oh! Father—Thou Fountain of Glory—that Thy laws do not urge by fear, but that they lead all Thy children by the hand of love.

Thou hast distributed Thy gifts, not with a niggardly or partial hand, but hast thrown them broadcast over the face of the Universe as Thou hast the sunshine over the earth. We look to Thee, oh! Father, as a child does to its parents, and as a helpless child looks to its mother. Oh, direct those upon this globe to become as little children, looking to and thanking Thee for all the benefits bestowed upon them. Stir in their breasts and within their souls the principles of Love, Justice and Truth, and make them to understand that Thy banners of light hang not in churches, but wave over every

Digitized by Google

spot where love dwells, and over every one who cherishes a desire to do good. Aid them, oh! glorious Being, to lift their whole souls towards Thee, not through fear, or from a sense of obligation, but in filial gratitude and love. Good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XXX.

DELIVERED 19TH JUNE, 1875.

GOOD EVENING. I terminated my last discourse by the mention of the re union between my wife and myself, a re-union that will last for ever, but not subject to the same relations that exist between unions of an earthly nature, for we were re-united in the spiritual bonds, fastened by the imperishable lock of affinity, whose key never rusts, and upon which the slightest defect can never come. This was no trifling moment to me; it was one that I cannot in any way efface from my memory. No, I never can forget the thoughts of that meeting, which occurred at what might be termed by you a far distant date, but which seems to me so recent, fraught as it was with such pleasant and thrilling incidents, which have become riveted upon my soul. No matter how my spiritual form may change, the transformation can never obliterate from the seat of memory that delightful moment which then greeted me. All my cares, all my troubles, were thrown in the background. Everything appeared displaced by the glorious light which illuminated my existence at that blissful moment. If I may be permitted to use an earthly simile, it was somewhat like the sudden appearance of luxuriant summer at a time when bleak winter had previously been prevailing in its utmost rigour, when the trees had been stripped of their foliage, when cold and piercing winds whistled through or around your houses and buildings, the minutest crevices of which the intense cold had penetrated.

The soothing summer air seemed to greet me, and we were locked, not only hand in hand, but soul in soul, form in form,

Digitized by Google

mind in mind. Now at length had I succeeded in gaining my soul's burning satisfaction, for before the attainment of that satisfaction my loved one had appeared to me like a star seen in the distance; like a star which seems to say: "There are many glories in me which you could perceive on a nearer view, for in me—which appears to you a little speck—behold a world revolving in mighty space in accordance with those universal laws which harmoniously control other countless globes." Would that I had language at command whereby to enable you to realise the glorious light that beamed upon my soul at that transcendently auspicious moment. I knew the purity and love of that bright being, and my feelings and thoughts towards her were such as no language can adequately express.

(After a pause the lecturer thus resumed):

Oh! as upon the borders of the deep in the darkest nights I have lingered, forms swiftly floating by have brought to me a most mysterious influence. Why should my soul despair? For is there not permeating every spot of the mighty domain of the Universe a Beneficent Supervisor who cares for all His creatures. As I stand upon this diminutive world His glory appears to me not less than if I were roaming at large in view of, and nearer to, more glorious orbs than this, whose light merely shines like the smallest of the planets that deck His eternal crown, a mere globe, of such dimensions (though great it may appear to you) that I, when gazing from those bright spheres above could scarcely perceive its light. The world upon which you at present exist—the foundations of which are so solid—has been constructed from mere atoms, and formed by a Supreme Power, a great and mighty Energy! The crust on which you tread could tell you, if possessed of the power of vocal language, that, not many years since, proficient as man had then grown in civilisation and education, he little dreamed of the powers by which he was surrounded.

Digitized by Google

Great as the present generation of men think themselves, they will yet be looked back upon by their posterity as merely emerged a little from a state of savagery. By a remote posterity you will be contemplated in a manner akin to that in which you contemplate the barbaric ages of your forefathers. whose crumbling graves and moss-grown paths are now obliterated to the view.

> Forget not time has chased the hours away
> And night at length has changed to brighter day.
> That which men look upon as great and grand
> Is naught, compared to that which is at hand.

All the inventions of your time, of which your ancestors were ignorant, will be improved upon and superseded in the ages yet to come, and as you now view the rude modes of travelling in use in the times of your forefathers, so will your descendants look upon those inventions of which your world is now so proud, but which will, in time, be superseded by other and greater discoveries.

You are all doing —each his part—something towards making a brighter path for those who are to tread in your footsteps by-and-bye. Yes ; as I have been enabled to tread the paths of countless worlds beyond, so will you, in time, follow in my footsteps and attain a higher state of being, and be united with those more spiritually developed, when all that is dark shall have passed away and everything become beautiful ; when the mind, through expansion, has dispelled all doubts, and the spirit has reached its peaceful home.

With my soul's affinity I was borne swiftly through the ethereal space to a bright city situated at the base of beautiful mountains of the clearest white This city, both in beauty and extension, exceeded anything that your imagination could conceive. In my progress through the spheres I observed that the higher the sphere the larger did the communities become, and the closer the affinity ; an affinity which at length did not admit of any separation.

Digitized by Google

Here there were no darkness or doubts; the mind of each was respected by the others as sacred. Each spirit was hopeful, truthful, loving and beloved, unfettered by any chains, save by those of true love or affinity. The ties of relationship blended through and permeated everywhere among this grade of elevated spirits.

A few words expressed by her who preceded me to this sphere, I will repeat :—"Ages, beloved one, seemed to have passed o'er me while roaming o'er the woodlands, o'er the gardens, o'er these sunny glades, awaiting with all the patience I possessed, this happy time that now I on thine arm recline. In passing through these scenes I have ever anticipated this re-union, and at the same time have viewed with reverence those supernal works which adorn the Universe of that Great and Glorious Being—the Divine Father of all. Now, however, I will ever be near thee—close beside thee—in the Eternal Future. The fountains of my heart seem to break loose when I know that I am with you, and that nought can sever us. Yes —blissful thought! I have at length realised the reality of that ever-cherished hope. When my soul has been inclined to sink almost to blank despair, a voice has borne me up, saying: 'daughter, doth thou behold the beautiful sea, the rippling streams, the glittering lights that from those planets illumine what otherwise would be dark? Those ever-revolving orbs, whose brilliancy is never dimmed, should animate you with hope. Even the birds as they warble their carols, the streams as they murmur forth their rippling music, should teach thee not to despair. Despair not, daughter, despair not, but rather with confidence look upwards and cherish hope.' Now before thee I fondly kneel and all—both past and future—appears to me like a glow of sunshine. Clouds that seemed to descend upon thee and me are for ever dispersed, and the glorious melodies of Nature seem to bring me closer to thee for eternity."

Digitized by Google

I shall now take the question of marriage into consideration, as being an appropriate subject to follow what I have related to you. Marriage is too often upon this earth-plane viewed and entered upon as a matter of temporary and personal convenience. In a few cases, however, the heartstrings are truly joined; in some cases the lute that declined to warble out its musical notes is gradually attuned by being brought into contiguity with another; but how frequently do you see those who, physically, have every comfort, nothing to mourn for, pining away under the infliction of mental anguish, from having been joined to one who has a repelling rather than an attractive influence. Is it not more reasonable to weep at such a marriage than to lament when the immortal spirit escapes from its fleshly trammels to take its flight to a brighter sphere? Is it not more appropriate that the sombre garments of woe should be worn when a heart, at the altar, is consigned to a living grave, for a soul is then bound to an atmosphere that to it is pestiferous. The weed then encircles the flower, cramping and nipping it, until it withers away out of the physical sight.

"Do marriages takes place in the spheres? Do all who are united here meet again in re-union when they have been transferred to the spheres?" are questions occasionally asked. I answer the first question in the affirmative, the latter with reservations. Marriages do take place in your future homes, but not, however, after the fashion of earth, for in the spheres they are unions, or re unions—as the case may be—of mind, soul and spirit—marriages of an eternal, not an ephemeral duration, as is the case upon this physical world, where a bride is decorated for the sacrifice with precious jewels and with a wreath of flowers around her forehead.

> Decked in white she hails with joy the morning gay,
> Only to mourn in time that bright but fatal day.

Digitized by Google

Her form, perhaps, is as stately as should be a queen's. With her maiden blushes veiled she is taken to the church to be wed. Alas! that it should be so—that brief moment and the few succeeding it are the happiest of her married state. Oh! ornate picture! gilded idol! decked in flowers that should ne'er have adorned thee at that ill-fated hour. Oh! unsuspecting one, whose grandeur will be stripped when the reality breaks in upon your soul, which will pant ere long to be released from that to which thou so freely, so lovingly, and so trustingly didst plight thy troth. Away! false vision—in blackest hues I paint thee—hues that would summon spirits from the depths of space! Awake, then, each soul, and look beyond the fleeting hour! But you, oh! you, who with solemn mockery have assisted at such a sacrifice, who with sacerdotal authority and pomp have joined body to body, irrespective of the fitness of such a union. Have you ne'er devoted a thought to the result? "The legal sanction is sufficient to exonerate us," you plead as an excuse. Will this suffice hereafter? Conscience may slumber now, but verily it will not do so always.

I earnestly and lovingly tell you, who willingly surrender yourselves as victims to what may be termed popular usage, that the acts of one short year may take you centuries to expiate or undo, therefore think well before you here pledge yourselves for life. You should reverently cherish and guard the attributes of your soul and your love, for they are the gifts of the Eternal One. The birds can fly over hill and dale while you may be fastened to one you inwardly despise until those tender bands which connect you to earth are severed. The limits of the feathered tribe are, however, circumscribed. Not so with you when that severance is effected, for, being superior to the birds, you can soar beyond the limits of earth and unfold in love and wisdom throughout the spheres of eternity! Life's journey you can, then,

Digitized by Google

uninterruptedly pursue amid the immortal beauties of the spiritual spheres.

(A suspension of the utterances here took place for twenty minutes, during which the Medium was in his normal condition. And on resuming the lecturer introduced another subject.)

Many of those who, during the successive ages of the remote past, were the means of making names for themselves in the history of the world upon which you are sojourning, have long been forgotten—their memories have—except to a few isolated students of history—gradually faded from the notice of mankind. By their contemporaries and their immediate successors they were, perhaps, almost worshipped for what has been termed their brilliant attainments. Time, however, has its cure—its remedies. They, as time has rolled on, have been looked upon as small sparks of greatness, yet the results of their labours and energies have been indelibly impressed upon the world. By those who have followed in their footsteps the sayings and doings of such men have been cherished; but the forms that once were the grand moving powers—the stars that shed their brilliancy o'er the earth—and attracted many from the east, west, north, and south, to look upon them, have risen to higher regions, and the works, the sayings, and the writings, are the remnants left to man of those gifted men who were inspired by those who had preceded them to the abodes of bliss.

But here the clouds burst! For another storm comes when, as the saying is, the graves give up their dead. This is one of the greatest changes, and what may be designated as one of the greatest enlightenments that can come to the spirit and soul when they are ready to revisit those scenes with which they were familiar in the rudimentary sphere. Hands that have long grown cold, forms that have long passed away, intellects glorying in both beauty and truth, become known to

Digitized by Google

those who have been the subjects of their inspiration. It will not be pleasant, perhaps, to many who have stood on the pedestal of fame—who have climbed the ladder of ambition—to find that invisible agencies have been around them, and are to be credited with a due portion of those merits which have been ascribed solely to men who, in reality, were simply media for the higher intelligences. But before they can thoroughly realise this knowledge, they will have attained such a state of perfection that the pride which they once cherished for their performances will be a thing of the past. The spirit and soul will have become pure, and the robes that erewhile adorned them will then be unfit for their forms.

But to return to the lovely city I spoke of. It seemed to be transparent, and was situated under the shadow of beautifully white and glorious hills, whose summits appeared to lift their towering peaks to the sky. The heavens, as far as the spiritual sight could traverse, appeared illumined by a lucid light. At this city I found millions upon millions of beings gathered together, hundreds of whom, I soon ascertained, were about to come under the same influence of Nature's laws as those to which I at that moment was subject. I also observed from a distance that there were assembled from afar children of the brightest intellect and most glorious beauty. robed in white, and from every portion of whose spiritual frames was emitted a brilliant, glowing light.

We were gradually drawn to a beautiful plain of great extent, where were many children gathering flowers and bunches of delicious fruit, whose taste gave new life and refreshment to the spiritual form. Floating in the atmosphere, and entrancing the sense of hearing, was music of the most melodious nature proceeding from unnumbered harps, which were played by a light touch of the hand. Everything was in perfect harmony. As far as I could perceive over this boundless and magnificent country, there were

Digitized by Google

beaming the rays of an ineffable light. A pure, serene air reigned over all—as if Nature was gently slumbering. In the scenes before me I beheld a concentration of love and affinity, magnificence and grandeur—more than I can describe, or you can comprehend or realize, the contemplation of which animated my now elevated nature with a thrill of unutterable joy, mingled with a feeling of reverence for the Giver of All. There were here no wasting, worn-out faculties—no heavy, depressed, and over-worked brains— no tired limbs, which sink under the burden they have to carry—no doleful-looking faces—no crying, weeping children—no mournful, wailing voices—no objects that could in any manner affect the super-eminent felicity that here reigned triumphant.

In my extended observations of this happy grade I saw what, in earthly parlance, would be termed a throne—probably the identical object which, by some of the biblical writers, seers, or clairvoyants, is designated as "the Throne of God." The light that came from it was of the softest and most subdued nature; and in its vast extent and greatness it appeared to me to exceed the size of the earth. I gazed upon it with almost riveted eyes and soul, and in the contemplation I could not but be reminded of my terrestrial inculcations—among which were most prominent that the Infinite One sat on a throne on which we would see Him when we left the earth, which was His footstool. Banners of different shades of light hung around the throne I then saw, and those who sat upon it were of such delicate transparency that I could not conceive it possible that they could be surpassed in brilliancy. An act of imagination great, on your parts, would be requisite to induce the smallest conception of that scene.

As I drew near to those who were seated upon the throne I was thus addressed: "These supernal lands can never pass away; they are as durable as the immeasurable universe. Years have elapsed since your advent to spirit-life. Take

Digitized by Google

now the rewards that justly do belong to you. Breathe a prayer for your journey now, which will not be one of darkness, as attended you when leaving that twinkling star called earth, but a journey of gloriously-illuminated light, which will make plain the way while traversing the realms of this vast and mighty sphere. Behold her who has watched and waited for you long. She is now, and henceforth will be, your guiding star, whose beauty and goodness will make all darkness to pass away, whose brightness will flash across and illumine your soul while traversing the realms of this Summer Land." Good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XXXI.

DELIVERED 22ND JUNE, 1875.

GOOD EVENING. The further we progress with you in describing our onward spiritual experiences, the more sacred becomes the spiritual ground upon which we tread. The greater the distance we take you increases the reverence that pertains to those spiritual realms which had been breathed upon by eternal zephyrs countless centuries before your earth came into form.

To those who sacrificed their lives and suffered the most terrible torments—the most cruel deaths—I would again briefly draw your attention. You whose hearts are light, whose lives are pleasant and easy, whose eyes glisten with earthly delights, who smile only so long as you are basking in earthly sunlight, approach these shores with reverence, for there the noble army of martyrs have trod. They have gone simply to prepare garlands to crown you with. They have only passed a little distance from you, yet such a length that your physical organisation will not allow you to penetrate or catch the slightest glimpse of their surroundings.

The innocent, and the guilty who have purged themselves of their sins, alike have been welcomed to these shores, whose gates are never closed, whose silvery notes of music sound forth for the lowly as well as the high—for the humble as well as the great. Here all earthly distinctions are levelled; the fame that has been attained upon earth is of naught; the ponderous castles that were built crumble like dusty ruins. Pervading everything here is a sanctity which seems to enshroud you—to envelop you both in mind and in spirit to

Digitized by Google

such an extent as to keep you transfixed to the spiritual shores on which you stand. At first this feeling—amounting almost to awe—engenders a wish to retire. 'Tis only for a brief period, however, that such a sensation predominates, and it is quickly followed by a feeling tinctured with grateful and pleasurable emotions.

These realms, to which my father had been called away to assist in making them easier of attainment for myself and others whose earthly castles had been thrown down, and whose souls had been released from all earthly cares and divested of all pain and strife, stand out in a glorious, illuminated light, that stirs within the soul a constant love and gratitude for the Hand that brought them into such a state of perfection. The flowers exhaled a sweet fragrance that, inhaled by the spiritual nostrils, augmented, a thousandfold, the love and gratitude, already engendered, for the Divine Architect through whose loving kindness these glories were prepared for us.

The inhabitants of these lands seemed united in one vast and mighty society; a union of soul, mind and spirit, that was ever cemented. The trees appeared to wrap themselves in soft sleep under the influence of the celestial light that permeated around. The aspiring hills, in an extended throng, towered majestically towards the beautifully illuminated skies.

They at whom the finger of scorn had been pointed, whose earthly cares had dipped them deep in dull despair—they whose drooping forms had suffered physical pain upon this earth—they whom care and trouble had worn down to a premature grave—are there on a par with those who, in their rudimentary state, had been crowned as monarchs or rulers of powerful states or empires. All are there reduced to one common standard. Churches and chapels with their multifarious and conflicting creeds have all been extirpated and become obsolete. Upon these shores stand forms which, like

Digitized by Google

the eruption of a burning volcano, have no special respect for any person, tribe, or nation; all superiority and inferiority have been displaced by equality, and the real action of life—or spiritual existence, imbued with Love and Truth—animates each soul that there sojourns. All distinctions have passed away, and the spirit steps forth radiant with the evidences which it carries. It is there where love is brought to perfection—where all the vulgar passions and animal propensities must have been, ere entering, entirely washed away. It is there where the soul first steps out of its little shell and reaches larger dimensions—where it first lifts its head like the rosebud, which seems to be innocently sleeping until the sunshine streams upon it, the light and warmth from which has developed it from a modest bud into a blooming flower, whereby the thorns and green leaves of the tree are decorated.

You have examples here among you of love, with all its swelling currents—with all its beauties glistening bright—that pours its sympathetic light into the darkest heart: that makes the cold pulse to beat with a warmer blood: that brings the heart into a softer feeling with mankind—thus thawing the icy barrier, which naught else has sufficed to efface. But there, in those realms above, we have love in a higher state, in the height of perfection: real love stripped of all foul decorations, selfishness, and everything degrading with which love is too often allied on your earth. We have it as bright as a diamond—as clear as a ruby: a precious ornament when worn by those who know and appreciate its value: a priceless pearl, which cannot be bought with all the riches of earth. It is a glorious truth. Love is a marvel—a mighty power—which overcometh every obstacle. It is love which binds heart and heart together. Even upon earth, amid all its troubles and its pains, we find this priceless jewel sometimes clear and bright, shedding forth its lucid light when the threatening storms of life almost cows the flesh and breaks

Digitized by Google

the heart. By the exercise of sweet, balmy love is the pained and troubled heart solaced. It is love that teaches the child to look to its mother. It is love which unites sisters and brothers. It is love which impels the father to face the dark and dreary storms of life. It is love that urges a man to sacrifice his life for another—even like our noble brother who laid down his life for the sake of those he left behind. The richest jewels that you can wear are Love and Truth; adorned by these bright gems you need ne'er despair.

It would be difficult—I might say impossible—to make most men and women understand the mighty difference between love in the grade of which I am speaking and love upon your earth. But, doubtless, there are some few of the more harmonial and spiritual of mankind who entertain a slight conception of the distinction which exists between the two. As I before remarked, love, in a qualified degree, pervades this sphere where you are now sojourning for a brief space. It not only pertains to the more noble animal—man; but it exists, in a marked manner, among the less noble—the birds, beasts and fishes. The roaring lion, who quickly would devour you, how gentle and tender with its young! Again, the diminutive and insignificant-looking ant, how careful and solicitous with regard to its brood! And so on all through creation, love is predominant; and everything speaks with a voice claiming—love!

Then, if love upon your earth is such a moving power, if love can prompt man to lay down his life for the benefit of those he leaves behind him, what must love be, stripped of all its earthly infirmities—standing forth in all its beautifully crystalline state—without a particle of alloy, and revealed in all its God-like purity!

With your mind's eye endeavour now to follow me to where those have gone who passed away in trouble, and, perhaps, in pain, whose spirits, young and hopeful, were carried

Digitized by Google

away without a moment's notice, without even a warning, swept away like the wind sweeps the spray across the sea; to where those have been transmitted who, here, were aged and crippled: those whose forms could no longer gain strength upon earth. Many of them are now within those golden gates where I met numbers of my sisters and my brothers. They are there within those crystal halls whose walls are of the brightest jasper, whose windows look towards the east, west, north and south, to worlds above, to worlds on high, which seem to hang in glorious lustre.

Many passed by, on paths of brightness, of those who had preceded me, whose forms I knew, and whose hands I had pressed in friendship, But they were now in a brighter and more brilliant state. Their eyes appeared to glisten with love, and their mental attributes were unsophisticated and pure. Though time and changes they had passed through, yet there they were—the living, identical forms, the friendly pressure of whose hands I again felt, whose love-like friendship nothing could destroy. The soul's affections drew out our minds; conversation needed no stimulus, as with you. Our spirits seemed, as it were, to interblend and correspond with each other's minds. I felt that I could not be compared to many of those beings who were around me, for their wealth of love exceeded mine, causing the following thoughts to pass through my mind: "Love seems to come from every hill—from every dale. Oh! show me the heart that does not in raptures greet this beauteous chord when it is touched. Music appears to blend with soul and mind, and you that have passed the golden gates and come across the swelling waters of the silvery river, and gained your position of sweet power, seem to say: 'Henceforth, by love we will persuade—by love we work through eternity.' Oh! love, that hath no bounds no chains; that still holds thy sway against man's mighty power even in this day; whose glorious affection is universal—thou

Digitized by Google

art the gift of the infinite Father—it was from Him thou wast derived; thou art like the air that is breathed, wafted forth in glory."

(The lecturer now released the Medium from the trance. After twenty minutes interval the discourse was resumed.)

Oh! what a joyous thing to walk hand in hand with those we love far o'er the flowery paths, where there can be no pain, no trouble, no sorrow; where all thoughts of those we loved are centred; where we see them, where we literally know them, and require not to study their characters, for there the character is marked, and plainly stamped.

I shall now proceed to the place to which I first drew your attention on entering this sphere. If you allow your memories to revert you will recollect that I spoke of what appeared to me to be a large and magnificent hall, where thousands of those beings who are invisible to your eyesight were assembled, prepared to depart on journeys. The hall was large and grand. Its pillars were of the most lovely fabric you could imagine. The walls seemed composed of crystal, and although very solid and massive they were transparent. The pictures and paintings were the productions of artists who had made names for themselves in some of the countries of earth, when their faculties were in their infancy; and now, after the lapse of time, and the exercise of those faculties, imagine to what a height of beauty they have been developed. The loveliness that beamed from every picture was far in advance of the finest pictures they had painted during their earth-lives. In this hall were countless numbers of spirits, who appeared to be drawn there on the same errand as myself. We seemed, in fact, to form one large and mighty family.

In the previous lecture I spoke of what appeared to be paths of light, which were the magnetic influences descending from the higher spheres, and as the visional powers are here

Digitized by Google

more expanded these magnetic streaks could be perceived to extend to an indefinite distance. This, to you, may seem difficult to comprehend.

On this earth, if you study that which is pure and high, it lifts the soul, and, strengthening the body, enables it to throw aside those temptations which often assail it. The flesh is ever weak; it requires the mind, the soul, to steady it, for if once the flesh is allowed to gain the mastery over the soul it immediately makes itself king and sole mover and possessor of the man. The passions of the flesh are, for the time, more potent than those of the soul, and although the spirit is almost always in constant communion with higher sources yet, when heavily pressed by the flesh, it frequently loses the mastery. But here it is different. The spirit stripped of its earthly dregs seeks that which is right and noble, looking back upon that which it has passed through with a feeling nigh akin to that with which you look upon a reptile or a snake. The reminiscences of its rudimentary life appear dark and dreary, and as it stands forth in this particular grade it sees plainly what it has encountered and suffered, and, in consequence, now rests satisfied, grateful and content.

It is only by watchfulness and care in the suppressing of all lowering tendencies, and by cultivation of the higher faculties, that you can possibly attain to the state which would qualify you to enter this sphere. Prayers are of no avail; weeping and mourning are merely like the water splashing itself against a rock, leaving little or no impression. The soul must pass to the fountains of truth—it must drink of the waters of eternal life. It must seek that which is pure and holy, and by no other way can it attain the golden crown of love and purity.

Oh! Father of all Light—of all Truth! Guide us, oh! guide us o'er the rippling stream of life! Press upon our brows the coronet of holy goodness. Enable Thy children

Digitized by Google

upon earth to view with complacency and resignation the troubles that beset them ; and cause them to understand that they can best serve Thee by assisting to smooth the rugged paths of the less fortunate of their fellow-men. Enable them to cleanse and purify themselves so that they may become qualified to enter at once the more blissful of Thy great and mighty spheres.

Oh ! Father of all Love—of all Light !—Whose presence beautifies Thy glorious Nature !—the wild and roaring ocean tosses its billows in glory to Thee.

We aspire to imitate Thy goodness, and in seeking the paths of knowledge we would fain clear ourselves of all things which are in any way detrimental to our progress. Oh ! let the path of progress be our path ! Let it be the only path for us to tread, and none other. Let us look to Thee, and offer our sincere praise to Thee—and Thee only ! May every individual of the race of mankind contend in loving rivalry to live in harmony with Thy beneficent laws ! May superstition be replaced by a true knowledge of Thee and Thy laws, so that man can, while knowing Thee aright, gain a correct knowledge of his own being ! Cause men to know that they best please Thee when they are doing good to those they come in contact with in their daily lives—when they are essaying to improve the condition of those who need support and strength in their voyage o'er earth's stormy sea. Good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XXXII

DELIVERED 26TH JUNE, 1875.

GOOD EVENING. To Thee, Oh! Father, whose glorious light illuminates the Universe: whose planets and other countless remembrances to man adorn Thy glorious heavens: To Thee, Oh! Father, we draw near—divested of all those reprehensible feelings which pertain to mankind in, what they designate, their worship of Thee—surrounded, as they are, by conflicting and inconsistent creeds and ceremonies. We desire to lift our souls towards Thee in devout and grateful thanks for the happiness Thou hast bestowed upon us. We know full well that the treasures which permeate Thy glorious realms are unfolded to each soul, illuminating it with a lustre which man is unable to picture. Then, Oh! Father, what need have we to supplicate Thee for mercy, or to rear to Thee a gilded shrine, or to mock with lofty titles Thy holy name? We desire to approach Thee in all confidence as the children of Thy love; and, as the sunflower turns its face towards the sun, which warms and unfolds it to a more advanced stage of development, so do we in like manner, Oh! Father, try to look towards Thee, that we may thereby be drawn into a closer alliance with the Good, the True, and the Beautiful. We now desire to speak of Thy glorious regions; and in doing so we tender to Thee our sincere gratitude for the impartial bestowal to all of Thy rich treasures, whose magnificence is so apparent that none can dispute their reality.

In my last lecture I left you in rather an abrupt manner, for the strength of the Medium having become exhausted, I was compelled to put what I had to say in as few words as possible.

Digitized by Google

To-night I will endeavour to depict the Summer Land—a world which has been definitely explained by some; but the human mind has been, and still is, incapable of grasping these explanations. The world that man has been taught to regard as his future dwelling-place has been made to appear so mysterious and unnatural that even the brightest intellect that has drunk at the fountain of knowledge, and has searched deep down into the rock, fails to penetrate or push on one side the thick veil by which men have enshrouded it. We who have realised it with all its beauties and delights, and now enjoy the sublime resurrection, miscalled "death," are anxious that the veil should be thrown aside, so as to enable mankind to have a true conception of, to most of them, the unseen mighty Beyond.

In looking at your world, we find various sorts and conditions of men, some of whom carry high heads, and throw their proud eyes higher still, opening their mouths, and consigning to perdition all those who are not of the same theological opinions as themselves; while they — wrapped in their imaginary mantles of impervious FAITH—tread the only true path—the narrow way which leadeth to their contracted heaven. Oh! what mockery—what vain mockery—to think that the beneficent Father Who diffuses His Light so impartially: Whose Glory illumines the whole of your being: Whose impress is stamped upon your souls, should limit the enjoyment of the future to a particular sect! The beauty of the hills as well as of the valleys shadows forth His gifts, which are distributed for the benefit of the poor and humble as well as for the rich and proud. The sun shines out with its golden light as much upon the meek and lowly as it does upon the haughty and supercilious. Then what a small conception —what a very small conception, indeed (you may repeat the words)—is entertained by such men of the universal and unbounded love of that Being who benevolently rules over

Digitized by Google

countless worlds, among which the earth appears but as a mere speck. That Omnipotent Being rules not in anger or by force, but by soft and gentle love, which rests upon all alike—

"Above, around, and e'en below,"
His love prevails where'er we go.

As I was contemplating the magnetic paths or streaks I spoke of I felt a pleasant influence wafting me along. It will be useless for me to attempt to try and explain to you the process of that power which caused me to move, for I should fail to make you comprehend.

It seemed to me that I was speeding upon the wings of time. The glorious speed and the gentle breezes, while they brought spiritual strength, also prompted me to contemplate the momentous thoughts of life eternal. I saw thousands more following in one grand march, moved by the same magnetic power. Diffused over the immense expanse of this glorious spirit-world are vast communities of spirits associated together in cities, towns, mansions and halls, which, although necessarily separated by distance, are yet indissolubly united by the bonds of celestial relationship existing between their inhabitants, whose attractions are parallel or similar. In my progress the heavens seemed to open, as if to afford me a more extended view of this seemingly illimitable world. My vision, although greatly increased, failed to penetrate into the dim distance. Language of earth is utterly powerless to portray the feelings which coursed through me when being wafted over the apparently boundless bosom of this auroral spirit-land, a land where all distinctions of the earth-sphere are forgotten by its inhabitants, where the diversified modes of speech which characterised them in the lower spheres have become obsolete, where all have become spiritually harmonised, and where language finds an exponent in thoughts more than in words vocally rendered. It is in that land where all nations are blended together, hand in hand, heart in heart, where

Digitized by Google

there are no ambitious contentions for superiority or for rule, for they are ruled by a Sublime and Mighty Hand.

Oh! Great and Glorious Power! I have sought Thee far; but now I tread upon the bounds of eternity! My soul is now released and I am connected with a world, from which I am free to roam to other domains of Thy boundless Universe. I now can see marked out, broad and plain, those paths of progression which rise higher and higher, ever approaching nearer to the Eternal Fountain of Truth!

(After the Medium had been released from trance for a short time the lecturer resumed his address.)

That phase of life which is by you miscalled "death" is but an alteration in the environments of the soul in its eternal experience. This event in the deathless life of the soul has ever—all through mankind's history—been not only unjustly magnified and exaggerated, but it has also been surrounded, for priestly ends, with revolting horrors, causing fear and dread regarding this natural change of conditions, while in reality the spirit through this beneficent change has simply been released from that which has tended to retard its spiritual progress. Upon the doubts and terror with which this natural and beautiful change has been invested Sacerdotalism has reared a superstructure which has been a baneful seminary for nurturing and propagating the gross ignorance and false fear pertaining to that which is in reality a glorious transformation. It may be that, in the act of transformation, pain to a limited extent is suffered, but in the majority of instances it is not so. When pain does ensue it has resulted from man's disregard of natural laws.

In that which is termed the "second death" there is absolute freedom from anything like pain. There are no lingering doubts, no forlorn shadows of the past, no hellish fears as to the future, to harass the mind. The truth has taken the place of priestly falsehood; the rocks that once

Digitized by Google

appeared so dark and dreary have been extirpated, and life's immortal voyage is pursued without fear of danger or doubt as to the future.

All I can at present possibly do is to animate your minds to the height of imagination, and thereby trace the spirit into this new and more perfect state of existence. Even if it were possible for me to utter language adequate to picture to your minds the unspeakably glorious surroundings of the spirit in this new birth, the account would be deemed the revelations of fancy or the ravings of an idealist. It is, however, simply impossible to depict in human language the manifold beauties pervading the Summer Land, the home of the progressed and progressing spirit. Until you have the most convincing of all proofs—ocular demonstration—to enlighten you, it must at present suffice to assure you that the condition of life in the Summer Land is a ten fold more heavenly state than most of you have ever dreamed of or anticipated, a state where the heart and soul rest in placid content and gratitude with the sublime beauty that surrounds them.

Myriads there are in the spirit-form besides myself who are amazed, when their thoughts revert to their earth-state, at how they could possibly have lived in contentment in view of the vast panorama of wretched darkness presented to them, constantly retaining the dreary clouds around, portraying the life to come in the most irrational and revolting of aspects, and in the most sombre of colours, when the path to that life should have been strewn with brilliant and beautiful gems—with diamonds gleaming, sparkling forth in splendid array to point the spirit to another and a brighter day; in fact, to an ethereal parterre, where flowers perpetually bloom: where there are no fading leaves or closing of the buds: where there are no streams that run dry, leaving an arid brook-bed without one drop of water to mock the thirsty traveller: where there is no appalling lightning or roar of thunder in the heavens,

Digitized by Google

sweeping in terror o'er the land: where there are no blustering winds—no drenching rain—but all glorious eternal sunshine and peace: where there are no dead to place beneath the sod: where no meretricious cathedrals or churches are to be seen, and where no creeds, no dogmas, find a place! Where also there is no creeping in by back doors or round the corners: where there are no agonizing tears, no martyr's sacrifices, no earthly pains, no pomp, no ceremony, no poverty, no rags, no begging or crying, no mother sighing for her child, no clergy falsely presuming to deal out God's blessings, no mountain torrents streaming down and leaving destruction in their train, no flowers drooping in the winter's cold, for, as its name implies, Summer is there eternal, and the whole scene is richly arrayed in one continuous and joyous smile.

> And where also there is neither dark nor dismal night,
> But where all is wrapped in glory and eternal light.

Would that I had language at command whereby to impart to your minds the transcendant happiness that reigns supreme in that blissful abode where our loving Father hath dealt out His blessings with no frugal hand—where spirits unselfishly unite, heart and soul, to build each other's homes, and whose true delight is in preparing for, and bestowing gifts on others.

Would that I could take you by the hand and lead you up the steps of that ladder by which you will eventually reach the spiritual realms of which I am now speaking. But before you are qualified to enter therein, your individuality must become purified to enable you to breathe with ease and pleasure the pure elements of another and different clime. To be qualified to become a denizen of that happy sphere, the soul must carry naught but pure and chaste thoughts—thoughts that are in consonance and harmony with the chaste surroundings—where there is not the slightest jar or discord perceivable; but where every impulse of the spirit is redolent of pure, unselfish, and unsophisticated love.

Digitized by Google

Man when upon earth gradually accumulates friendships, the stepping-stone to which is by you termed respect or regard. Respect is a beautiful jewel whose light shines forth in splendour. That light acts as a beacon to point the way to friendship, which, ultimately, by the glorious law of affinity, becomes cemented and enduring. As the blending of dew-drops, so is the commingling of pure and true friendship. Affinity—the outcome of friendship without alloy—between two individuals is as true as the needle to the pole, or as the ivy to the oak, ever clinging one to the other. It so blends those who are affected by it that their thoughts are intermingled. I have known—fallacious as it may appear to you—a spirit who has been drawn by the powers of that affinity to correspond in thought with another, not merely thousands of your miles away, but separated by vast realms of space—a distance that, to you, would be deemed illimitable! The powers were so firmly, thoroughly, and indissolubly linked, that no distance could intercept the communion!

The soul-engrossing powers of those spirits who are in affinity increase to a degree which is past your powers of comprehension and my ability, under present circumstances, to explain. They gradually attain to such a height of perfection as no earthly language can describe. Minds are so drawn together and interlinked by these beautiful laws as to enable them to dwell in placid peace throughout the ages of eternity!

Soon after my advent into the Summer Land I was conducted by a band of spirits to a home which seemed exactly suited to my mind, for as I have already said, from my having been a lover of Nature when upon earth, I loved to be alone, to listen to the sweet warblings of the birds, to see the sun rise and set, and to hear soft winds sighing among the foliage of the trees. My earthly ambition was not great. I was not bent on accumulating an estate of territorial wealth.

Digitized by Google

But there was always burning within me a desire to know more of Nature and her laws. This was what my soul thirsted for, though through circumstances my earth-life led, unfortunately, too much in another direction.

I found my home consisted of a beautiful dwelling, embellished and enhanced by scenes of which I was ever enamoured. Each compartment was of immense proportions, capable of accommodating a vast number of friends, and there I found very many of my ancestors, some whose characters I had not known, and many of the more remote, indeed, I had never heard spoken of.

Each spirit, be he rich or poor, educated or uneducated, here, on his advent to that Bright Land, will meet his progenitors, who are ever preparing for the reception of those of their descendants who are yet to follow them. Do you think they can forget them? No—resting as they do upon the firm foundations of truth and love, and robed in the mantles of content and happiness, they tranquilly await their coming to welcome them to their heavenly home. I must now say, good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XXXIII.

DELIVERED 29TH JUNE, 1875.

GOOD EVENING. Owing to the unfavourable condition of the Medium, I shall be unable to remain long with you to-night; and, in consequence, I must try and make the best of the brief moments.

I am desirous of analysing more minutely than I have done, in the preceding spheres, the grades of the Summer Land. I wish to describe them in connection with their avocations and, what you would term, their daily existence; and, at the same time, picture to your minds as closely as I can the state of existence as experienced by myself in that region of happiness, where the grades are less numerous and more harmonious than in the spheres below it; and where the spirit—after having passed through so many scenes calculated to purify it—has become more exalted; and where, also, it undergoes, what may be designated, a probationary term prior to its translation to those celestial planes of whose existence man may have heard, but of whose joys and glory he can entertain no conception.

The spiritual atmosphere of the Summer Land is one of purity, but not of absolute purity, as will be readily understood by those who are aware that, from there being no finality to the aspirations of the soul, this sphere is not the acme of progress—happy and blissful though it be. The summit of progression, like the end of eternity, is utterly unattainable by spirits. In this sphere it is where those who have knocked at the doors of knowledge are admitted within its precincts: when sufficient of the knowledge they have been desirous of

Digitized by Google

acquiring has been gained, and the spirit has risen above the desires pertaining to its rudimentary state, and the after effects of these desires have been got rid of.

The spirits of a higher and more exalted state of perfection are visitants of the Summer Land, where suggestions and advice are offered by them for the benefit of all below their plane. These celestial visitors are free to descend at will to this amalgamating plane. I use the term "descend" to adapt the expression to the earthly phrase in vogue. But as the heavens are opened in all directions of the vast and mighty spheres of the Universe, there is, in reality, as I stated in a former lecture, neither ascending nor descending, neither above nor below as you imagine. Priestly ignorance has ever taught that heaven was above the heads of earth's inhabitants, and the falsity and absurdity of this could not be perceived so long as it was supposed that the earth was stationary and flat; but now that it is known that the earth is spherical, and revolves diurnally as well as annually, no one can honestly continue to believe in this erroneous conception.

Spirits rise to the Summer Land because of their simple and good qualities having been so highly developed—so beautifully expanded—qualifying them to become fit companions of those in the initial land of Harmony and Unity, whose foundation rests upon the great ruling power of spiritual progress.

In the Summer Land, as I explained to you before, the influences of the lower spheres (save the recollection thereof) have been got rid of—having been displaced by an infinite ocean of love and light, which illuminates the broad path to the progressive Beyond. The spiritual influences, permeating the existence of the Summer Land denizens, are of such a refined character as not to admit of the approach of anything pertaining to what is termed by you evil. The social atmosphere is of too etherealised and subtle a nature to permit of its being inhaled by souls destitute of pure affinity.

Digitized by Google

The spiritual faculties of the sojourners on this plane of the Summer Land are fostered and encouraged by the ineffable and boundless love of those who have passed beyond, and of whose celestial benevolence those who are yet to follow are the continual recipients. The tireless and universal good-will of those exalted spirits is incessantly brought to bear upon the sensitive organisations peopling the fifth sphere.

The spiritual organisation is as firm and solid as your own, although in your present condition of life you can neither feel nor see it. We, on this side, can plainly feel, as well as see you, but we do not touch you in a manner analogous to the exercise of that sense by yourselves. We feel you by the current which emanates from every body, every mind, every soul. By those chords of harmony we are enabled to feel you, and by the same means we are enabled to influence, in a manner somewhat similar to that by which the mother influences the child. This subtle medium, not being understood by mankind, cannot be believed by them to play such a large and important part as it does in the intercourse of spirits with the beings of the mundane sphere, and the great majority of the latter consequently scout the idea of that which is, nevertheless, palpable to every investigating and impartial mind. I have heard many make the observation that they would believe if they saw or felt. Short-sighted mortals! Little conception have they of the laws of Nature above and around them, which enable those in a higher state to traverse, unfettered, the mighty domains of the Universe, and which admit of this intercourse which, as yet, is in its infantile or rudimentary state. Yes, it seems incomprehensible to man that spirit, which is invisible to him, can make its influence felt. Yet the annals of his history, more especially during the past twenty-five years, proclaim that this marvellous fact has been accomplished!—a fact that would soon be widely acknowledged and admitted if man would,

Digitized by Google

aided by his reason and free from prejudice, guide his mental barque over the sea of experience. Reason, influenced by wisdom, is empowered to gaze into the profound depth of Nature's laws. Man should seek a knowledge of all things below and above, visible and invisible, for from these, through the divine Evolver of all, he has derived his being. Men who have groped in the dark for responses to questions that have baffled them have been succeeded by those of broader thought and more reassuring courage, who have ventured to pierce into the unknown, and every essay of the kind has resulted in benefit to mankind.

By a knowledge of agencies, invisible and mysterious to man, spirits are known to envelop themselves in a temporary mantle, so that what is deemed the spirit is now brought into perfect light, that all within view may see. But in reality it is not the spirit that is seen, for it is concealed by the mantle or adumbration which has been manufactured from the particles (phosphorous, hydrogen, oxygen, &c.) in affinity one with another, and which have emanated chiefly from one who is termed a Medium for that purpose. By such means are spirits enabled to construct a temporary coating, assimilating in appearance to the body which enshrouds your spirit, thus enabling all within sight to gaze upon what they designate as "materialised spirits." But as I said before, it is not the spirit that is seen, any more than is your spirit seen within the covering of flesh by the physical eye. The spirit stands within the coating, which alone is visible, except to the clairvoyant; but that which is invisible to the physical eye is a more glorious and enduring substance than the material by which it is encased.

The laws of Nature appear capricious to man. On one part of the earth the storm king marshals his armies to the strife. Terrific detonations from his artillery rend the skies! The agitated elements, in their apparent frenzy, hurl their

Digitized by Google

thunderbolts upon the earth, scattering destruction around! I have observed the winds blowing softly and gently on one part of the earth, and over another part at almost the same moment I have seen them raging, and sweeping houses and portions of the land from the sight of those who were dismayed at the conflict of the elements. I have observed the winds raging, the ocean lashing high up above the land, and, as you would say, drowning hundreds—passing them off to spirit-life; while on another part of the same sphere, and but a short distance off, I have observed the atmosphere as placid as 'tis here at this moment; and, all are unconscious of the solemn dirge of destruction that is being played by the howling winds a few miles distant from them, where numbers of mortals have been on their knees calling for mercy, and selfishly praying for blessings and favours upon themselves from His throne, so as to thereby escape from calamities which, had they utilised the reason they were endowed with, and profited by the experience of others before them, their own foresight should have provided against. Yet they impute to Deity that which is due to their own negligence in not providing against. How partial and inconsistent must such small-minded beings deem that omnipotent and impartial Being to be, who pours His blessings alike upon all, and ordereth all things well, though to man's short-sighted vision it may appear otherwise.

I cannot help dwelling upon this subject, for it seems to plunge me into a vein of mighty and deep thought. Here are you in this city,* where at present there is no wild raging of Nature, no thunder reverberating through the atmosphere, no lightning dealing devastation around—all is quiet in Nature here. But as I look into the distance I behold lightning and thunder-storms bursting from the clouds,

* Melbourne, in the colony of Victoria, Australia.

Digitized by Google

making the timid to shrink away in fear and dread. This seeming partiality or inconsistency in Nature is unaccountable and mysterious to most of earth's inhabitants, and shakes their faith in the impartial love of God and the stability of the Universe. Yet the Father's laws are as impartial and stable as the Great Soul of the Universe Himself? The winds blow, the lightning flashes, the thunder reverberates not without cause. They are animated by laws which are the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. Oh! man, thou ought with reverence to lift up thy soul to Him who created those glorious laws which you have yet to understand aright and act in accordance therewith. They should awake within you a desire to penetrate the mystery encircling your being, for the study most conducive to your spiritual progress is the study of yourself and the glorious destiny awaiting all eventually, whereby you would be enabled to judge by the metewand of eternity and not that of time, and learn that what appear misfortunes are but blessings in disguise, since even what is termed evil tends to good eventually.

By those who belong to the higher existence, a grand and adorning process is perceived to be gradually embracing your world. To all Nature I yield my adoration. To her rocks and mountains I bend in humbleness and reverence. To her mighty and infinite Soul I bow down in reverential adoration and love. The more I see of His vast domains, the more am I lost in admiration, and tossed like a ship upon the wild billows of the vast ocean of eternal space.

As I have before said (and the repetition will tend to impress the fact upon the tablets of your memory) all the nations of earth on their advent into the Summer Land are, in their spiritual existence, blended as one people. There is no pointing with the finger, and saying, "he is black—he is yellow," for the sons of night have risen into this new birth. Language, as made use of upon earth, is not needed—the

Digitized by Google

exertion of speaking is not requisite. They who when upon earth were considered foreign to each other in their modes of speech, are enabled in this glorious world to enter into each other's thoughts, and converse without restraint or hindrance. All nations—all colours—are knit together by this grand link of affinity; they are on a par before the loving Father of all, united in one Brotherhood!

But here a question, doubtless, arises in the minds of many: "Is each one there bound to associate, or keep in company, with the other?" The answer is a simple "No." I will relate a conversation which took place as I was brought into affinity with one whom I love—a sage of an advanced state. Addressing him I said: "Around these halls—these mansions grand—in which I am told I am to dwell, canst thou tell me, sweet friend, of what nature my spiritual existence shall partake?" Here are his words to me: "There are undertakings here grand and vast in which to exercise and develop your faculties. If you in philosophy have studied, or any of Nature's secrets tried to unravel, here will the path be made plain to you in the pursuit of such knowledge. Around you here are friends, who are in dearest relationship—that of sublime affinity—who will aid you in every endeavour. Here is everything that mind and soul can wish for the development of these faculties with which you are endowed, and which will enable you to reach to higher states and more transcendant worlds. You cannot mourn or pine around these halls whose walls are decorated with the choicest of pictures, and the most estimable paintings, executed by many who have passed to a higher sphere. But come with me, and I will show you living images both grand, loving, and grave. Hence—to this window;" and with his hands the curtains he gently drew, revealing a sight beyond which I could not understand. "Quickly say," I cried, "what are these untold myriads. It seems to me that worlds upon worlds are living here." "It is

Digitized by Google

true—it is true: here is one vast and mighty plane which encircles unnumbered hosts of beings of every clime and complexion of earth, and who here now enjoy true felicity, free from every perturbation or care. Inside these folding gates are the richest treasures, where peace, content, gratitude, love, reign supreme. In other spheres that you have traversed the grades have been separated by a distinct line of demarcation; but here, as you perceive, there is a thorough blending into one—all living—all basking under one sublime light.

"The astronomer who was stayed below from studying beyond a limited degree the vast heavens, has here unbounded opportunities for gratifying his tastes in that direction, and thereby benefit the human mind. Understand you not? You seem to be wrapped in darkness. No doubt it doth appear marvellous to you who have comparatively recently passed through harrowing scenes—through dreadful and horrible panoramas of spiritual existence—through all the darkest and most hideous scenes that it is possible to portray, that such incalculable masses of spirits can exist together as one community in peace and unity. Strange, no doubt, it doth seem to you; but behold for yourself that it is nevertheless true."

Yes, as the sage truly perceived, it was then strange and incomprehensible to me, but my mentality became more vivid while tarrying in those realms of light, and I could subsequently perceive the all-pervading cause of the mighty union.

Father, oh! Father, before Thee I bend in reverential humility. The earth, viewed from my spiritual home, seems but as a dot in Thy expansive Universe, and is but one small witness of Thy wondrous works. Oh! Omnipotent Being, as we ascend in spirituality, as we approach nearer towards Thy divine purity and light, the purer and grander Thy works appear—clearer are they defined to our comprehension, and each step in our ascent makes Thee to appear enshrined in more exquisite beauty.

Digitized by Google

My newly-acquired and loving friend led me forth among the beautiful and well-arranged streets that intersected the vast proportions of this wondrous city, which appeared to stretch into unlimited space. The houses were of proportions so vast as to seem capable of containing, each of them, a large community. I there heard music of a description which arrested my attention. I was puzzled, and my friend, witnessing the sensation I was experiencing, took me by the arm and led me to the dwelling from which proceeded the strains that surprised me.

Here comes a riddle for the reader outside of the philosophy of spiritualism. It will, I doubt not, be difficult for him to understand that such instruments as pianos, harmoniums, organs, and all the musical instruments in use upon your earth, could possibly exist and be utilized in the spheres. Yet it is so, and, what is more, *their use there preceded their invention* (so called) *upon the earth!* All those musical instruments (with the invention of which mankind erroneously have solely credited themselves) were long designed in the Summer Land before they were ever thought of upon the earth-sphere. In that elevated region the inhabitants were conversant with all the wonderful undertakings and inventions which mankind have subsequently acquired. In other words, from the Summer Land there have proceeded influences that resulted, throughout the ages of man's history, in the acquisition of all that man has deemed as being simply the product of his own brain! This being the case man should not henceforth assume to himself the sole credit of inventions which have been prompted by his invisible ancestors and friends. Many of those innocent and unfortunate creatures, who have been cruelly destroyed for what was termed witchcraft, were mediums through whom were foretold by spirits from the silvery shores many things, in connection with contrivances or inventions, which have subsequently been verified.

Digitized by Google

Laugh who will at the statement (yet ridicule cannot impair the fact) that through spiritual influence the brain of man has been, and is, animated to think, and has been, and is still, unconsciously to most, incited to achieve those results of which, unaided, he would never have dreamed. In some cases the recipients of these influences have been aware of their indebtedness to outside agencies for their achievements, but few indeed have acknowledged it. In the near future this will not be so, for the veil is being drawn aside which has so long obscured the light of truth.

Having cast your shell away you will, while standing upon those shores above, view your descendants travel without the aid of railway-car or smoking horse, which will have been displaced by inventions facilitating speedier and easier transit.

I remember well the hour—yes, the moment—when my pen was instigated to write that the earth would be encircled by wires. From whence did I receive the influence that prompted me to predict that of which, then, there was no foreshadowing—as far as human mentality could perceive? The influence was apart from myself and those with whom I associated, and came from higher inspirations—from nobler sources.

From a more elevated standpoint than that which you now enjoy you will, in the future, behold your descendants, emulous of the birds—competing with them in the rapidity of their transit—using for such purpose the great and grand current that encompasses the whole of earth.

Oh! Soul of all Light! Oh! Father of all Glory! Who art infinite in Thy love, Thy wisdom, and Thy power: we know how inscrutable Thou art, and, withal, how truly loving in Thy Nature.

With humble reverence and the liveliest gratitude we bow before Thee, to whom we are desirous of lifting our souls so that they may blend in union with Thine Own: united in

Digitized by Google

such a manner that we can rest secure in the full assurance that the union will prove of eternal duration.

From Thy laws proceed countless echoes which awake within our souls an intense thirst for greater knowledge of Thee and of Thy vast realms. Oh! Mighty Being, how little do we feel in the presence of the great evidences of Thy power which Thou hast spread around us. Assist, Oh! Thou Beneficent Being, all who are sunk in superstition and darkness. Cast light upon their souls and gather them around Thee. Surround us all, Oh! Father, with Thy Divine Love, and may the Eternal Dawn drive away all dark superstitions from every one on earth and in the spirit-world, and bring every soul towards Thy loving presence. Good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XXXIV.

DELIVERED 6TH JULY, 1875.

GOOD EVENING. The brightness which gleams from all Nature upon this earth can only be fully perceived and realised by those who view it from a more elevated plane than that of mundane existence. If in the first, or rudimentary sphere, there gleams such a brightness from Nature, what, think you, must be the crystaline state of it in the Summer Land? Spiritual hands are there that have planted flowers centuries and centuries ago in the parterres of that luminous world—even the same hands that assisted to adorn the antique cities of earth with arborescent and floral loveliness. Hands are there that have, in the remote past, reared mansions which enhance and embellish the architectural designs of countless cities in that bright sphere—the same hands that laid the foundations of structures on earth, whose ruins yet remain visible in testimony of the ability displayed by the architects of the colossal designs which they represent. Hands are there too that have exercised their skill in executing beautiful paintings with which to decorate the walls of those magnificent mansions—the same hands having gained celebrity for their owners in the earth-life, where all that is seen is but a meagre sprinkling of what is beheld in the glorious spiritual spheres.

If you have followed, as described, the ascent of the spirit to a higher state of perfection, and the spiritual power that it has acquired in the transitions through the various spheres, you must have perceived how steadily have been the gradations from one stage to another, for there has been no rapid or sudden transition from the bad and the darkened to the

Digitized by Google

highest and the purest, or from the ignorant to the learned; but the progress in the ascent of the ladder of eternity has been slow and sure.

I have deemed it unnecessary to linger upon the subjects connected with each nation concentrated in the sphere of the Third Birth. It will suffice to say that Hindoos, Chinese, Turks, Russians, and the other nationalities of earth, are there in a gloriously halcyon state, under one sky, under one glorious heaven, under one Power. There they are joined hand in hand in countless numbers, all knit together by the same tenacious ties of affinity which are destined to bind in one family all sentient souls, whose ever enlarging circle embraces the people of all the nations of earth in one harmonious cluster! How many countless millions of your years must have transpired ere such a state of serenity and perfection, as is manifested by the harmony and affinity at present existing, was attained! For (mark well) that attainment has been the result of easy and natural gradations—a regular advance stage by stage, in accord with all the progressive movements of undeviating Nature.

In that atmosphere of celestial peace, as I have observed, the myriads of souls are bound by one mighty chain of affinity. In that chain there is not one link which has a flaw—no such thing as separation. The clouds, though not like those of earth, float o'er the bright heavens above us, beyond and far away, enhancing the beauty of the glorious day, whose sun seems to set with resplendent rays of light, but to rise again in its normal state of splendour.

Except in size, the domicile, upon whose door-step I loved to stand and gaze beyond, was all, and more than all, my mind had conjured ere my advent to this sphere of true affinity. Within its golden shade were congregated many of my ancestors, some of them from a remote era in the earth's history. The embellishments within were of the most chaste

Digitized by Google

description. The walls were profusely decorated by works of the highest order, executed by loving, spiritual hands. The style of the whole surroundings combined both sublimity and simplicity, surpassing imitation by beings below that spiritual plane, where all the glories are not ephemeral, but abiding.

He who longed for a stately mansion had there that longing gratified, a mansion erected not by himself, but by those loving friends who had preceded him. He of a quiet and gentle disposition, who abjured ambition, and was content to view placidly both the rough and the smooth side of life upon earth, had there that which was grateful to him. Behold him seated within the simple portico of his cottage, which is surrounded by shrubs and flowers of different kinds and hues, whose delightful fragrance is diffused around. The cottage, indeed, is not large to look at, when viewed from the exterior, but an inspection of the interior undeceives the beholder, and he perceives that its capacity for accommodation is of no limited degree. See how gracefully it is entwined with wreaths of flowers, trained by hands that never tired to work for the loved ones who were to follow them. On the other side I beheld a distant plain, whose silvery edges and whose golden tints mingled together, almost fascinating the spiritual eyesight, gifted, as it is, with extraordinary powers of vision. A flash of brilliancy appeared to transfuse itself, revealing all that is glorious.

In the Summer Land each spirit can obtain and enjoy that which is in accordance with his natural inclinations—inclinations which are found to be so diverse among children of the same parents. Each one has his or her particular study, or little hobby. That which to one is painful or onerous to do, another will perform with pleasure—a pleasure that comes from the fountains of the heart. One will, perhaps, enjoy the interchange of thought with others of a similar taste and disposition; while another hastens away to the sequestered

Digitized by Google

woods where the birds warble in sweet and gentle tones. Nature's mould, as I have said before, was never duplicated. All things are different, however similar they may appear outwardly. Two beings in humanity's guise may closely resemble each other in exterior; but how different in heart, in feelings, and in tastes—how different in all their undertakings!

Children on earth if left alone would be taught by the whisperings of Nature. But a pseudo civilization, with its social trammels, steps in and curbs the natural bent, and forms the mind contrary to its inclination. The child is too frequently coerced or restrained by its misdirected education from adopting principles that would be congenial to himself and in consonance with the higher manifestations of liberty and happiness. Earthly society has forced the child to play the hypocrite—has taught him all sorts of dogmas, creeds, and ceremonies—has made what otherwise would have been pure and honest so deceitful, that the black corners which are usually concealed oft unexpectedly show themselves, and with dark dismay horrify the owner. Such will ever be the case until society is remodelled and placed on a more natural basis than it is at this present moment. It should be stripped of the pernicious veneering that empoisons the atmosphere of civilisation. Let it be divested of this, and men and women will stand forth in Nature's characters, fearing not the investigation of their neighbours, and shedding forth their lights upon those who are less favoured than themselves. They will then be encircled by the goodness of their actions, showing that they are not influenced by the mockery of so-called civilisation, or by the frivolous rules of a false society.

Society in the Summer Land stands in contrast (need I say, favourable contrast) to the false position which it assumes upon earth. In that world there is no pseudo show. Society reflects there as does a true mirror. The spirits there know

Digitized by Google

that they are under natural law—surrounded by all things that are beautiful and true. There is no need for decorating the outward form, as both inward and outward correspond in glorious splendour. The dress and fashions of earth have become obsolete, and the inhabitants of this lovely sphere are garbed in a manner peculiar to themselves. In the spirit-world, clothing is regulated in a normal and natural fashion; and materials of various kinds being plentiful, there is no limit as to choice.

Having been told that spirits are clothed, the question has been asked by some who are yet to become spirits divested of the physical coating, "Where does your clothing come from?"

In the spiritual spheres are trees from which is procured material of a finer texture than is to be found upon this sphere of yours. It is not worked or spun with the difficulty that is experienced in manufacturing here, but is quickly and easily woven and made. Spirits in the Summer Land generally wear the lightest robes, of different colours and of different texture. The purer a spirit becomes, the finer and more beautiful will be the texture of the robe which adorns it. Nature, in profusion, offers the embellishments for decorating the spiritual form, for flowers are in abundance. Stones also, of a nature which you deem "precious," are plentiful, but they are rarely in requisition, as few spirits cast a thought upon them as far as decorating their forms is concerned, for the lights constantly emitted from their bodies are so brilliant and beautiful that they bedim the brightest gems, and are sufficient to satisfy anyone enamoured with display; not that a love of frivolous or outward show is there to be found, but they are animated solely by a chaste desire of appearing as becometh spirits who are so much nearer in love, wisdom, and purity, to Him who is absolute perfection.

Digitized by Google

Many investigators of spiritualism have been puzzled to account for the materialisation of spirit robes. This is easy of solution. The spiritual muslin, as such it is, is invisible to the physical eye, and in spirit-life is, as I before remarked, manufactured with ease and rapidity. The change from an invisible (to you) to a visible article is brought about in this manner: The muslin is brought in close vicinity to the Medium, from whom particles—as they emanate slowly from the body, are gathered. These particles (of so subtle a nature as to be unseen by you) are concentrated by a strong magnetic force, and two spirits (the number generally engaged upon such a work) exert themselves to, as it were, saturate the muslin with the aura or particles in a manner that bears a resemblance to the impregnation of material by oils or paints for the exclusion of water. Phosphorous is the principal component part of the particles in requisition for the purpose of materialising spirit robes at materialisation circles. But to complete the work a third spirit, who is characterised by the possession of magnetism of a grosser nature than the other two, now performs his part by magnetising it. The muslin has now become objective to the physical sight, and will bear handling, but it is not of a nature so durable as to bear the influence of a powerful light, which, if brought to bear upon the fabric, resolves it into its original condition. This phenomenon of spirit power has been a great mystery to many of earth's people, who have doubted even after having grasped a portion of the palpable robe! These statements can only be appreciated by those who have witnessed spirit materialisations, to all others they will be unintelligible.

I shall now return to a description of the society of the Summer Land. To rule such a vast nation or world as the one I speak of requires no crowned heads of kings or queens. No war or bloodshed is needed to reduce to obedience

Digitized by Google

recalcitrant or refractory subjects, for all are bound together in harmony. If it were possible, and persecution were to send in her war staff, all harmony would cease, and be dispersed like clouds before the wind. It is almost needless to tell you that when the rule of persecution steps in all peace vanishes. (I am now alluding to the earth plane). When once the dreadful sword has been appealed to it takes years—many years probably—to restore a country to prosperity. During the horrors of a protracted war—when life has been sacrificed for the sake of mere ambition on the part of one or two individuals—all harmony is dissolved, all love departs. One brother would take the life of another; one sister would sacrifice the other. The father would look with disdain upon his son for daring to turn away from that which he was requested to do "for his country's sake." The thunder of cannon is, as yet, the sole arbitrator of disputes between nations. This unnatural and barbaric state of things will disappear when the banner of Reason is unfurled to the breeze. When reason crowns the day all cruelty and violence will disappear.

In the Summer Land bands of spirits, comprising many thousands, resort to the golden praries for recreation or pleasure. They have no need to carry food, for fruit grows in profusion on their path—fruit whose ambrosial juice is adapted to the spiritual palate.

"Can the spirit take rest?" has been asked. Yes, the spirit takes sleep and rest, though of a different kind to that of the physical body. When at times the spiritual form is depressed it needs repose, which it enjoys in the form of what you would designate as magnetic sleep, which renovates the spiritual faculties. But think not that the term depressed, as here applied, is to be interpreted as meaning that the spirit is subject to depression of a nature analogous to that which prostrates the mortal form. Far from it; the only feeling of earth that I can recall to memory that bears the slightest

Digitized by Google

analogy to spiritual weariness is a pleasing languor, to which the human frame is sometimes subject.

Shortly after my advent to the spiritual spheres, I entered upon enquiries to gain a knowledge of the ancients, and now I am in possession of the information which I sought. There is not a land—there is not a dale—there is not a mountain high, nor valley low, which has not brought to light some spiritual forms.

Some prejudiced people speak in disparagement of Spiritualism—because some of its manifestations are produced under cover of darkness. It would be well were they to apply the ancient motto to themselves regarding the "beam" and the "mote." I may here remind them that the dark, Jewish ceremonies that were conducted in Solomon's great temple have, to a great extent, been perpetuated, and are now imitated— perhaps in a modified form—by some of the religious sects of "this enlightened age."

The trance or magnetic sleep is not of modern origin, for it was among the phenomena of thousands of years agone, but the practice was checked by the priests, who knew full well that if others than themselves were allowed to instruct the people their power would be lost. To put an effectual stop to any enlightenment from higher spheres, the sacerdotal order has, throughout successive ages, brought the batteries of "Hell" and "Perdition" to play upon the fears of the ignorant and credulous.

The Church of Rome still asserts that she holds the power of miracles, as well as the keys of Heaven; and many of the credulous devotees of that church believe the assertion. The so-called miracles—pertaining to which there is any truth—were all performed by the aid of individuals who now would be termed media or mediums. This class of human beings, when their medial powers are thoroughly developed, will assist materially in the progressive advance of the race.

Digitized by Google

Oh! Thou Beneficent Being, Creator and Governor of the Universe, Thy bounties are strewn far and wide, and our gratitude makes us to look up to Thee with delight and love. A better knowledge of Thy laws has banished our fears and caused us to love Thee more. Thy glories speak to us in one language, and with thousands of voices, continually prompting us to do what we deem will be approved of by Thee.

That which we once took delight in, oh! Father, and which retarded our spiritual progress, has gradually been left behind; and as our souls have become more enlarged and our faculties more sensitive and inspired, so has our love for Thee increased, for Thy tenderness thrills through our spiritual hearts. Thy love is as a beacon-star which leads us nearer to Thee—not nearer in space; but by ascending Thy glorious heights our souls are brought in nearer communion with Thee, Thou Being of infinite power and love. Teach those, oh! Father, who are yet to stand upon the same plane as we now do, to know and to feel Thy glorious and eternal love; and we pray Thee, hasten the time when all hearts—they that have entered spiritual life and they that are here—may be bound together by one tender tie which no hand can sever. Good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XXXV.

DELIVERED 9TH JULY, 1875.

GOOD EVENING. Spirit of love and purity! grateful are we that Thy regions are open to us. Oh! Father, bedew us with that eternal love which Thou hast bestowed upon Thy creatures during the countless ages that are past. Every portion of Thy creation speaks in language yet unknown to mankind—in a language that will one day, when the race has advanced, be interpreted aright. With us, who are upon the celestial plane of existence, every vestige of Thy works appeals to our souls, and creates within us a burning desire to know Thee better. Those numberless worlds, those suns, moons and stars, which revolve in all their glory, lighting everything with a luminous brilliancy, stir feelings within our hearts surpassing description. Teach Thy children on earth, oh! Father, that to obtain a true knowledge of Thee they must reverently and perseveringly become students of Nature, which is the result of Thy unerring wisdom and creative power. Cause them to understand, oh! Thou sublime Being (whom men invoke under manifold names) that it is to Thee, and Thee alone, that they should address themselves, for they and we are all Thy children.

To curb those inclinations which retard the ascent in spiritual life depends much on the balance of mind. In earth life the debasing propensities of the flesh are too prone to rise and conquer the spirit and to bedim the soul; for the flesh, composed, as it is, of particles of earth, naturally inclines towards the matrix whence it originated, and for which it has an attraction or affinity. Hence the degrading qualities that

Digitized by Google

are so marked upon some natures whose spirits have failed to contend successfully against the dominion of that which, for a time, confines it. As man becomes refined the spirit grows purer and gains power—gradually becoming victorious over that which was once its oppressor, it rises in sublimity and aspires to study subjects which previously were unsuited, if not distasteful, to the individual.

During every waking moment of your existence—aye, and in moments of your slumber—you are reminded that you possess something superior to the portions of your being that are susceptible of physical pain, that you are blessed with a something that will outlive or survive that which for the time conceals it. The Almighty never gave you those organs, and made the blood to circulate through the multitudinous veins and arteries of your bodies, without having placed that within you which, at times, must peremptorily urge you to regard and treat it as an immortal principle dwelling within that form whose every movement is regulated by an internal mind. It is the everlasting principle within him which makes man to be the focus to which all things below him tend, for he stands upon the apex of creation as the master piece of evolution.

As each individual of the human race is dependent upon the other, so should each act to the other in a manner commensurate with that dependence. Every soul's philanthropy should be universal, apart from creed, complexion, or country. Lacking this universal diffusion the beautiful stream of harmony is wanting. As the various rivers of earth are meandering to one vast body of water, which has been divided, for convenience sake, into oceans and seas, so should the members of the human race be considered as flowing in one direction, hastening to one mighty ocean of eternal progress, ever aspiring towards their divine Author.

(After a short pause the lecturer resumed as follows): Yes, ten thousand voices seemed to say to me, "You must return

Digitized by Google

to earth and proclaim the eternal truth. Instil into the minds of mankind the joyful information that the soul is perpetually progressing toward the perfection of its nature, going on from strength to strength and shining for ever with new accessions of glory. Engaged on such a mission you must work by the power of love." Could I refuse when these sweet voices thus spoke to me? No, for I had not forgotten my aspirations when bound to the sphere of earth, for whose inhabitants I cherished warm and loving sympathies, commiserating (oh! how deeply) the reason-bound condition of the race whose spiritual progress was so unjustly impeded.

Like a bird which has escaped from its cage I travelled to earth in eagerness to commence my mission, for I had long entertained a desire to rescue men from the thraldom which encompassed them. My first object was to secure an instrument suitable for the intentions which I had in view, but I found that I was not qualified to develop a Medium. I need not dwell upon the incidents in connection with the way in which I was afterwards offered the opportunity of using this instrument, it will be sufficient to say that I was accompanied by one of those who had developed him to a spot of earth which was surrounded by trees of centuries growth. In a habitation were assembled the members of what is termed a "circle," which, in the common epithets of the time, was "cursed and damned," and by their neighbours it was declared that those who attended it would be consigned to eternal flames. Here I came behind an uncouth wood-splitter, whose occupation was to mar Nature's adornments.

When I first arrived at that meeting of "common" men, one characteristic of the magnetic circle appeared most peculiar to me. I allude to the influences which connect each sitter of the circle. I would like some of the would-be philosophers of the day to catch the secret of that aura which is incessantly passing from the human body, and which enables

Digitized by Google

some of the lower animals to follow your footsteps with the unerring certainty that they do. There have been many who have tried to fathom this secret, but have failed.

My first essay resulted in a few broken words issuing from the lips of the medium ; and it was with the greatest difficulty that I could utter them—imperfect though they were. Practice, however, tends to perfection. This subject whom I at the present moment can walk about, and whom I have so completely under control, could not be made by me at first to utter two sentences in a connected form, and in the trance state his attitude, resting on a seat, was one of rigidity. Now, as you perceive, I have absolute control of the body when entranced, though I know full well that, ere long, I shall be unable to control it ; for spirit, when it has reached a certain state, cannot control matter. To explain this apparent enigma —I am gradually, but surely as the dawn appears each morning in your eastern sky, about to pass away to a higher sphere ; and when that ascension has taken place I shall be incapacitated from controling, *directly*, a medium on the earth-plane. I have already lingered with you longer than I expected ; and —perceptible to me—my soul, my mind, and my spirit-form are gradually rising to a more sublime state—nearer and nearer to the Celestial Sphere. In the primitive phases of its existence—as I have remarked more than once in preceding lectures—the spirit has frequently been compelled to succumb to inimical influences ; but as it proceeds in the chapters of the "Book of Life," it becomes pre-eminently spiritual, and is merged in sublimity.

Man ! measure your every footstep, and know that the miscalled "dead" still live although they have passed from thy sight. Fear not ! The grave may cover up, and decay may eat the mortal form which to earth will return ; but the deepest grave can ne'er hold a human soul, because it must rise to that Higher Source that gave it being.

Digitized by Google

I will now advert to a subject about which there has been much controversy and infamous calumny—that of "seducing, lying, and deceiving spirits." It was in connection with this subject that I first became acquainted with what is termed by some on this mundane sphere, "disgusting spiritualism." Sad to say, there are those who have been so cruel as to defile, and pour their venomous slander on the "dead." There are those who have dared to mock after the "death rattle" has sounded its signal. Oh! sister—Oh! brother—Oh! father—Oh! mother, art thou so destitute of feeling as to calumniate those that have preceded thee? Think you that those loving souls who are awaiting your coming would return to earth to deceive you? After having traversed myriads of miles of space—to those spheres which they had risen to grace—think you they would return to deceive those whom they are desirous of benefiting? It cannot be denied that there are deceiving spirits; but 'tis easy to guard against their deceptions if reason be exercised when receiving their communications. The terms "dark" and "light," as applied metaphorically to evil and good in this physical world, receive a literal application in the spiritual world, where everything is revealed as it is. Those whose souls have been sullied by an existence derogatory to their natures, are symbolised by darkness; and among such are found spirits whose unworthy proclivities, by which they were characterised on earth, have not yet been cast away. These dark ones sojourn in a sphere of darkness, which they have made for themselves. But rest assured that 'tis only a sojourn—that 'tis not their final place of abode. They have been their own chastisers; but true repentance, combined with holy aspirations and the performance of good works, will in time raise them from the realms of darkness to a brighter sphere.

Ye self-constituted conservators of souls, how dare you from your pulpits vitiate the atmosphere of your churches by

Digitized by Google

attempting to vilify those who in love and sympathy return to earth from their bright homes of glory. How dare you endeavour to sever the links that connect the affections of brothers and sisters, and to darken the spiritual regions by your cruel sneers? Receive in return the assurances of those whom you have libelled that the poorest as well as the richest inhabitant of earth is lovingly watched from the homes of released spirits by his kindred, who grieve when he errs, and rejoice when he adheres to the way of truth and right. The slandered ones tell you that the great spiritual movement which is now o'erspreading the earth has for its object—which will surely be achieved—the enfranchisement of mankind from the bonds of ignorance and superstition which have too long held the reason captive. The aim of spiritualism is to demonstrate to all the fact that the spirit's condition in the higher life is affected by the individual character, formed by his daily actions in the primitive state. As a knowledge of the philosophy of spiritualism increases, which points out that to a large extent man makes himself what he is and is self-responsible, so will ignorance and crime decrease.

Believe, oh! believe, ye physicians of souls, that when death steps in there is no miraculous, instantaneous change of the character—no apotheosis of some, and degradation to eternal demon-life, or hell, of others. Death neither robs mankind of the virtues, nor relieves them of the vices cultivated by them on the earth-plane. The ordeal is passed without any change other than that which is effected by the release from the physical envelope and the acquisition of perceptions in advance of the primitive state. Progress to a higher condition of life is secured by volition—by the exertion of will, and by the influences of brighter beings who are ever ready to assist in the elevation of those on a lower plane than themselves, whenever the desire or aspiration arises within them for advancement. As ye will know hereafter, spirits

Digitized by Google

inhabit a world of progress—a world of activity, and not one of inactive, languid and selfish enjoyment, or yet one of eternal despair and suffering.

Though ye may thunder forth with brilliancy of language, yet you fall far short of the truth when you speak as you do concerning those ministering spirits who revisit earth to influence for good, and remove the false ideas you have instilled into people's minds. What a malicious—what an atrocious accusation is that which you make touching the loving and the beloved ones—whose affections on earth were never doubted, representing them all as wicked spirits who return thence to blacken the hearts of those they loved! Mother! would you, if taken from earth away, and transferred into eternal life, return to earth to deceive your sons and daughters? Would you, father, whose soul's strings had been drawn—whose heart had bled for the many pains your sons had suffered—would you return to earth to lead your sons astray? Man must, indeed, fall far below the estimation which I entertain of him if he can credit this.

Would I could convey to you an idea of the feelings which are experienced by the bright denizens of the spirit-land when they think of the millions of human beings who, through erroneous teaching, are enshrouded in darkness—enveloped by the curtain which conceals the truth from them.

Mentally place yourselves on the other side of the channel, with no hope or prospect of making yourselves recognised by those on this side, and then imagine the revulsion of feeling by which you would be animated when you had found a small and narrow way—no matter how imperfect—by which you could pass something to assist and comfort those who are yet to follow. Study it, oh! study it; and think of the thrill of delight that would stir within your souls at the thought that you could, even in an imperfect manner, transmit little messages to bring them to the fountain of the waters of

Digitized by Google

Truth, where they could quench their thirst. It is impossible for me to impart to you a conception of the sensations experienced by me when I first controlled this medium—imperfectly though I did so—for the purpose of at length executing the commission which I had taken upon myself to perform. I almost felt as if I could have enveloped myself in flesh again and spoken as of yore upon earth.

Of all the bright and luminous worlds I had beheld there were none which had such an attraction for me as this comparatively small one of earth, for was it not the scene of my rudimentary existence? Yes, I had always beheld earth with a longing to return and perform my part towards satisfying the cravings of the soul for light on this subject. I had ever sympathetically viewed the current of human affairs, and was ever animated by an intense longing to turn it into a brighter channel.

Verily when the assurance is given you (which every man, every woman, every reasonable being can now verify) that the beloved ones beyond the veil do still love and care for their friends on earth, and can return and communicate with them, bereavement should be divested of its great bitterness. Your friends are not gone from you for ever to a bourn from which they cannot return—across the stream of death they are lovingly and patiently awaiting you. He who has placed you here makes His light to shine upon you, giving you the necessities of life, and sending the beauties of Nature, to decorate and make your existence upon this earth a smiling one. Surely He never sanctioned the existence of a lock, or a chain, which could separate the love of those who, for a brief space, have gone before you! No, no; believe it not; but realize the truth by reverently studying those laws which encircle your being, and are worthy of His love.

The laws which govern and limit spirit intercourse with mankind appear strange to casual and superficial observers.

Digitized by Google

Wait! I will get Ben Jonson to explain briefly what I mean.

"People come and sit round a table to see the table dance and turn. Society learns its A B C from unseen monitors, whose efforts to demonstrate are frequently ridiculed, causing frivolous and deceiving spirits to be attracted instead, and intellect must take the consequences. To simply see the table hop and move by 'animal magnetism' they assemble in a vein of humor, and become convulsed by merriment. Very clever philosophers! Very."*

I may here observe that all truth is eternal. There is, and can be, no new truth. Man is prone to say "the discovery of a new truth," as if its advent had just taken place! It matters not when it was ascertained to exist, since its pre-existence was embodied in the laws which gave this planet form. The discovery (to man) was new, but not so the object discovered. The same with physical and spiritual truths, which emanate from the same Eternal Source. The condition of humanity is to be improved by the spiritual commune which has been so recently initiated, and which is as yet so imperfectly understood. Spiritual realities and the revelations of spiritual truths are not of interest to the idle and thoughtless, but it is the industrious and earnest seeker after truth—he who would know the depths of his own spiritual nature—that is deeply interested in those phenomena which will instruct him in the nature and power of invisible influences. The latter will be actuated by a noble impulse to impart what he has learned, and disseminate it around for the benefit of all.

---

* This paragraph was uttered through the medium by B. J. in a semi-jocular, combined with a regretful, tone of voice, as if deploring the superficial observation which is too frequently brought to bear upon spiritual investigations.

Digitized by Google

Oh! what an expanded prospect was before me when I had gained my desire of expressing my sentiments before an assembly of human auditors! Associated with me was a mind,* the reflection of mine own, who would share with me the task which I had undertaken. With one mind, and animated with the same hope, we set about our mission of teaching mankind that they can tread with footsteps sound and firm, and attain to everlasting life, independent of all creeds, dogmas, or man-made religions.

Oh! Soul of all Life, we approach Thee with all reverence. Thy laws and Thy glorious brilliancy embrace and smile upon all. We worship Thee and we adore Thee; but our worship is not circumscribed by dogmas, creeds, or ceremonies; for we worship Thee with a true love—with an affection which seems to bind us with golden fetters to Thee. Oh! Spirit, Thou glorious Guide! whose Beautiful Star rises o'er the storm-lashed earth, we raise ourselves towards Thee, but are unable to mingle with Thee. Thy lights, Thy glorious domains, Thy countless worlds, all rise up as majestic witnesses for Thee, and Thee alone. Oh! Father, we fall far short of comprehending Thy vast and glorious powers; but as we become more worthy of Thy love, so we hope to advance in our knowledge of Thee. May Thy Soul shine upon us with all its brilliancy—with all its glorious Unity, binding us together in love and truth. As the birds warble forth the music of Nature, so do we lift our spiritual voices to Thee, Oh! Father of fathers—Life of lives—who has known no beginning, who knows no ending, and whose influence reaches to countless regions beyond. Good night.

---

* Evidently Spirit Robinson, who was unknown to earthly fame.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XXXVI.

DELIVERED 13TH JULY, 1875.

GOOD EVENING. Oh! Thou Beneficent Father of all Thy creatures, wrap Thy Mantle of Glory and Beauty around us and around those who have yet to travel the road that others have done who have preceded them. May Thy Glory, as it has ever done, shine upon all. May Thy Fountains of Love ever bedew them. May the golden links of affinity, truth, and love, connect them together in one mighty chain, so that they will unitedly proclaim Thy glorious beneficence.

Shed forth, Oh! Mighty Being, the rays of Thy rich truths. Urge mankind to seek the Fountains of Knowledge which are perpetually flowing. Oh! Father, with gratitude inexpressible we think of Thy blessings to us, and to those who have yet to follow us. We feel that Thy infinite love and attractions are ever drawing us towards Thee—ever more closely binding us in affinity with Thee. Oh! may the endless Ladder, with its multitudinous steps, be made plain to the whole of mankind, so that they may strive, in loving emulation, to attain higher and higher. May Thy glorious Streams of Knowledge pour into the darkest recesses of their hearts and animate them to a knowledge of Thy laws pertaining both to Thy physical and spiritual domains. Teach them, Oh! Father, to look to Thee, and Thee alone; make them to know that they may lean with confidence upon Thee, and shelter themselves under Thy mighty love. We are confident that Thy lustrous Eye beams with impartial love upon all Thy creatures. As with Thy Love, so with Thy Justice: which unerringly inflicts punishment upon all who disregard Thy Divine laws.

Digitized by Google

Thou Eternal, Omnipresent Being! speech fails to express the feelings which we entertain towards Thee. Accept, then, our thoughts (which Thou knowest) as the expression of our thanks—from the depths of our souls we are truly grateful to Thee for Thy loving care of us.

I have a remark to make to-night in reference to unconnected utterances of some of the lectures.

My powers of description (in view of the channel of communication to which I have been restricted in my intercourse with you) are totally inadequate to bring to your mind's eye the sublimity pertaining to the scenes of which I have been treating, and I can only hope to have been partially successful in my endeavours when dilating upon those portions of the spiritual existence which bear the closest analogy to earthly life. I know that I have achieved but meagre success in the illustrations that I have submitted for your consideration. I cannot but coincide with those who have remarked upon the disconnected form of some of the lectures, but when you have mentally traversed the spheres through which I intend to lead you the imperfections of these lectures, which are now so apparent to you, will have been overlooked, and, perhaps, forgotten.

'Tis with keen regret that I deplore the fact of my inability to picture to your minds the transcendent glories of the ethereal worlds beyond. The further I advance with you the more manifest becomes my impuissance to describe, so that you might comprehend that of which you can have little, if any, conception.*

* Having, in moments when my mind has been calm and all quiet around me (through spiritual powers which I possess), had glimpses of the beauteous Summer Land, since these lectures were delivered. I can fully endorse the glowing though inadequate description given by the lecturer of that bright and glorious realm, with its lovely hills and dales, and its balmy pink atmosphere suffused with an exquisite perfume,

Digitized by Google

Those of you whose intuition and reason have taught you to believe that this world of earth is but the nursery for another and higher life, will readily embrace the pleasing consideration that the soul is perpetually progressing toward the perfection of its nature, and will continue to do so throughout eternity, so that it will shine forever with fresh accessions of glory! To that ambition which is natural to the soul of man how pleasing, how agreeable, must be such a certain knowledge! This glorious consideration of a finite spirit (even the lowest in the scale of existence—those who, in the rudimentary state were, or are, deemed the pariahs of society) ever ascending towards perfection should suffice to abolish all feelings of envy in inferior natures, and all superciliousness in superior. The spirit who now appears as an angel to a human being knows that the time will arrive when that being (no matter how degraded) shall be as glorious as himself! He knows that, however high he may attain in glory, the yet inferior nature is destined eventually to ascend on a par with him, and shine in the same degree! With such inexhaustible, though they may be latent, stores of knowledge and virtue enshrined within your souls, how considerate, how loving, should your attitude be towards each other in this nether world! And what sublime ideas—what glorious conceptions—should this knowledge impart to you of the attributes of that infinitely wise Being whose unbounded, illimitable love, has created such a transcendent and immortal destiny for his creatures.

---

imparting an indescribable feeling of serenity yet of buoyancy, which I could never have imagined had I not experienced it, and of which I am aware I cannot convey to others the faintest idea. As all, however, by the inevitable mandates of the law of Progression, must, sooner or later, enter the bright Sphere referred to, so, when those who have read these lectures experience similar feelings, the feeble description thereof herein given will, doubtless, be recalled with vividness to their memories.—Ed.

Digitized by Google

Think ye not that this progressive condition of the soul presents a pleasing contrast to the theoretical absurdities which have been taught the devotees and worshippers of what is named the "Christian" religion?—some of the sects of which teach that a *hiatus* occurs at the dissolution of body and spirit—that life is not continuous for all—that death is not a herald but a destroyer for the many. According to the ideas of a large number of Christians when a human being is transferred from earth it is either to immediate and eternal bliss or to everlasting torments, as an angel or a demon vile! What a monstrous doctrine to promulgate! What earthly analogy can they advance to warrant such an unnatural doctrine? They hold that the sole and everlasting avocations of the favoured few are prayer and praise, while the majority, doomed to eternal perdition, can but weep and wail, and gnash their teeth! ! ! The cold assent which the mass of professing Christians have given to this terrible, but, happily, mythical and false doctrine, has never sufficed to influence their lives. The hearts of the millions have not been touched by the prospect portrayed to them of the life to come. The Creator who has made the heart and soul of man the richly endowed gems that they are, will never take His creatures to task for the indifference and horror with which they regard a heaven and hell which they are neither prepared to enjoy nor deserve to be consigned to.

Man, as a rule, gives too little heed to his intuition and the voice of reason. He is too careless and callous as to their lessons. It is the right and imperative duty of every sentient being to exercise his reason, by which God-like attribute his instinct or intuition should be influenced.

In the glorious Summer Land sparkling streams, devoid of all impurity, flow down the mountain side. There the sun's beams shed around a flood of light, divested of all scorching heat. There flowers bloom with a deathless beauty and

Digitized by Google

fragrance. There the mandates and intentions of Nature are religiously obeyed, for "Progress, Love, Harmony," are the watchwords of every spirit.

I was naturally anxious to traverse the various scenes of this enchanting sphere, where harmony ruled o'er all, and finding one who had tarried there long, he readily and kindly acceded to my wishes by accompanying me, and acting as my guide over those extensive domains of the Summer Land. In the first place I was taken, not by roads similar to those I had traversed before, but by wide, magnetic paths, of a width far exceeding any I had observed in the lower spheres, and whose distance appeared marked truthfully before me. These paths are so well-defined, so very plain, that a short sojourn in the Summer Land suffices to make one acquainted with the direction in which they lead.

(The state of the Medium here compelled the lecturer to release his control, and after the expiry of about twenty minutes he recommenced).

For good or for evil—as the human mind is trained—so the higher or the more debasing faculties prevail. The faculties should be trained to activity, and kept well subordinated; and when they have attained full self-possession, and their owner self-guidance, then the mind of the man may be considered to be in a receptive state for spiritual truths. Let every man examine himself through his conscience, by the Divine Law which is impressed within every soul. If he but follow the dictates of that holy voice he will never willingly go astray, and will ever enjoy self-contentment. Conscience if not stifled is uncompromising, and is an earnest and just teacher, whose warnings are infallible. Serene is the consciousness of right. Sweet are the responses of a clear conscience, which, with the aid of reason, should be the guide of man in the path of duty when all other aids fail him.

Digitized by Google

When I was performing my pilgrimage upon earth I was taught to believe that I could salve over my conscientious scruples by simply outwardly conforming to the rules of the church, and putting on a religious face. By the ecclesiastical despots of the day (as it has been by many since), it was held to be a cardinal and vital necessity that, in order to be "religious," it was absolutely essential that piety should be artificially increased—that solemnity and austerity should take the place of cheerfulness and pleasure. Through a blind superstition in the power of "faith," my contemporary co-religionists were taught the doctrine of the efficacy of "faith"—that there was genuine merit in believing that which they could not understand, and which their teachers could not explain. But that age cannot be said to be more marked than another in its spurious piety and attempt to dishonour natural religion. No; for, thanks to ecclesiastical despotism, artificial religion has been handed down as an heirloom from generation to generation. Can it be said that this generation is free from the vile thing? that eighteen centuries of what is termed Christianity have sufficed to exterminate it, and its natural effect general hypocrisy?

With feelings of love and reverence apparently ruling the heart, but dissatisfaction rankling there as my knees pressed the velvet cushion in the "house of God," I was fain to imitate my fellow-worshippers by turning mine eyes skyward, and banishing all kinds of cheerfulness from my countenance. This was in my youth, ere reason came to the rescue to free my soul from the wretched mental bondage which enslaved my tender years, during which I had been taught that the essence of "religion" consisted in clothing all life in dreary solemnity.

But what a contrast in the Summer Land, where I have seen countless thousands moving briskly in gay and festive scenes. There is not a doing, there is not a saying there, which does

Digitized by Google

not expand the soul with truthfulness. Every thought there is a ray of beauty from the soul; and the beautiful life there so permeates all the being that existence with us is nothing less than "worship"—high aspirations, unselfish actions, and eternal gratitude to the loving Father of all.

In the lower grades of the second sphere, the spirit is free to ramble, and, like the bee which flits from flower to flower, sipping the life therefrom, cares for little else than its own selfish ends. But in the Summer Land the very antithesis is presented. The inhabitants of that celestial sphere are souls that cherish warm love and blessed sympathies for every creature. They enjoy the purest delights when their efforts have been crowned with success in bringing a wanderer of earth back to light, in breathing hope into repining and faltering hearts: such are among the crowning excellencies of their joyous lives.

In that sphere I found many who had long left earth, where they had received the advantage of an advanced education, and where as stars they had shed a radiance for a brief space. Here I found them, and hailed them as brothers who were in the same mind as myself. With them I studied, each leaning upon and assisting the other.

An incident occurred soon after my advent into that elevated sphere which forcibly reminded me of the motley scenes of earth. I was brought into a vast and mighty theatre, amid whose surroundings I felt at home, for my gifted intellectual faculties responded to the sublimity of the representations. Showers of light poured upon me—music awoke the harmonies of my soul. Architecture in its grandest sublimity, paintings of the most meritorious degree, enhanced the representations in that extensive scenic hall. The arrangement of seats was not such as to place a barrier between spirits, each of whom was at liberty to assume whatever position his mind or his affinity prompted. Each one

Digitized by Google

among the great throng appeared to recognise the other as a loving friend, and to beam with the other's light and love. Countless numbers of little children were there, arrayed in different colours, and arranged according to their spiritual powers. Young as they were their spiritual perceptions enabled them to grasp the intentions of the didactic representations, every one of which was fraught with a meaning conducive to the elevation of the mind.

It was in the Summer Land that I ascertained it to be an imperative duty for young children, who had not known earth's troubles, to be taken to the world where their parents had been tossed on life's troublous waves. It is necessary that they should be taken there so that they may become acquainted with life's varied phenomena, and also that they may be enabled to identify themselves more with the mysteries pertaining to their being. A child taken from the earth when very young has naturally no desire for, or interest in, earthly life, and it becomes absorbed in its attachment to those who have taken care of it in the spiritual life.

Is it better, then, that children should remain on earth and develop into manhood or womanhood? Yes, it is preferable that a child should live upon earth to an adult or mature age, there to gain a knowledge of the terrestrial life. The translation from earth of a child of tender years has prevented the affections in the hidden recesses of the heart from having been developed as was intended by Nature.

Launch us further, oh! Father, into Thy profound mysteries, that we may acquire a better and clearer knowledge of Thee. Even in the soft arms of magnetic sleep allow us to drink of the waters of Thy everlasting truth. Thy Being pervades every interstice of the mighty Universe, and Thy glory is ever transmitting its refreshing remembrances to us. Oh! Thou gracious Being, we are constantly reminded that Thou art ever around us—that Thy glory is ever near us.

Digitized by Google

Thy magnificence and might expand as we ascend the steps of Progress, and each step of the ascent impresses upon us the conviction that Thou lookest with equal tenderness upon every being of Thy vast creation. Thy handiwork of golden hues are so conspicuous, and united in such a manner, that none can pass through even the terrestrial existence without observing them.

We who are in the higher and more advanced state know that words can avail but little when offered to Thee in the form of prayer. Acts of benevolence—acts of goodness to each other—are more acceptable to Thee, who can well dispense with prayer and praise from Thy dependent creatures, though they are beneficial to themselves in raising their thoughts and aspirations from those things which are evanescent.

Oh! may we ever regard with reverence and love Thy beneficent laws. May we ever be desirous of extirpating all fallacies and foolish thoughts, and seek to beautify our souls by knowledge and wisdom. May we ever seek to lean on Thy great and never-failing strength, Oh! Father, whose brilliant light is lovingly shed o'er us.

We are solicitous that mankind should lean upon Thee with the same confidence as ourselves—a confidence that nothing can shake. Teach them, Oh! Mighty and loving Being, to look to Thee as we do—not with fear, but with reverential love Make them to obey and understand Thy laws as we do obey and understand them.

We thank Thee fervently for all Thy blessings to us and to them, and we earnestly pray that mankind may aspire to know the truth, so that they may be liberated from the bondage of ignorance and superstition which has so long bound the minds of the race. Encourage us, Oh! Father, to attain to the full height of the faculties which Thou hast placed in man and in spirit. Good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XXXVII.

DELIVERED 15TH JULY, 1875.

GOOD EVENING. Oh! Spirit of all Love—of all Glory, who showest Thyself in all things, and hast oft manifested traces of Thy wondrous power, but whose Shrine of Life is enveloped in mystery, once more we thank Thee for the nature which Thou hast bestowed upon us.

Without casting his eyes beyond this terrestrial globe upon which he is placed, man can see around him manifold objects which testify of Thy Eternal Existence: objects which are subject to gradual but sure mutations as Thy laws bear upon them—falling, fading, crumbling, dying, till they are accumulated in other particles with which they have affinity.

Among the most glorious things pertaining to earth which can possibly be brought to the minds of mankind, is the language which flowers and vegetable life can teach them; for they have a life within which is as perfect in structure as that of the mind which observes them.

We see Thy Presence, Oh! Glorious One, in the faded rose —in the withered violet—in the lily, which from snowy white has turned to brown; and we also perceive the beneficence of those unvarying laws which necessitate the transformation: a change that should arrest the attention of the human family, and make them think of, and prepare for, the time when their outward forms too shall fade and wither from the sight of all earthly things: when they will have to bend beneath the pressure which will be placed upon them by Nature's laws, which demand that they shall cast off their earthly coatings and pass away to gladden the eyes, quicken

Digitized by Google

the souls, and electrify the spirits of those who have passed before them.

Oh! Thou gentle and perfect Being, unite our souls in love to Thee. Soften all hard and contracted hearts, so that they may be disposed to forgive all offences. Enlarge still more the affections that are in them; and make them to see that the most acceptable service which they can render Thee is to act with kindness and justice to one and all of Thy children with whom they may come in contact, or with whom they may commune.

Unaccustomed to offer apologies, yet I must apologize this evening: accept my sincere regrets that I was not in time to receive the Medium from his guides.*

In one of my former lectures I made allusion to one of those fountains of untold riches which pour down upon the spiritual existence and enlarge the soul, for it was there that I beheld an immense concourse of spiritual children, among whom were two of my own. And you will not, probably, have forgotten my brief relation of the circumstance attending my first interview with these children in a lower sphere, where their purer thoughts and more sensitive feelings interposed a barrier which effectually precluded prolonged commerce or communion with myself. But now I could clasp them to my heart with all a father's love, with all a father's joy. I had them beside me accompanied by countless others who gradually steered their way, by some unknown power, to earth. They were two of the dearest beings I could possibly think of, whose hearts and souls I had never

* Spirit Robinson, who with Hurst precedes the Lecturer for the purpose of putting into trance the Medium, stated this evening that the "Leading Control" had not arrived, and therefore requested the exercise of our patience for a short time. In about 20 minutes from the time of the request the Lecturer took control of the Medium. The cause of the delay was not stated.

Digitized by Google

before been enabled to analyse. But now I had them mingling with me, and lavishing their caresses upon myself—as fond and loving children of earth are wont to do—awakening within me such affection as only those can imagine whose heart-strings have vibrated to those delightful strains of music elicited by the chords of parental love. The glory of such love encircles many on this terrestrial sphere with its wreaths of purity, and with a light inexplicable. Take away the endeared children from the loving parents and the house becomes a blank. The joyful music, which sent forth its simple strains, is silent. No longer are the familiar echoes heard—all is cold and dreary. But list, fond father, and believe, loving mother, that, although the forms which you have been accustomed to see and love have passed away from your physical vision, yet from these have proceeded more sublime counterparts, whose purity transcends your imaginations. In the loneliness of your sorrow how cheering to you it should be to think that your loved ones are not wholly gone from you. Rest assured that they are frequently beside you—that their hearts throb in sympathy with every effort on your parts, and thrill with pleasure at every success.

The greeting of welcome, so gentle and so soft, emanating from purity and resting upon love, from children whom I could now call my own, was past expression. Those children in the earth-life I had sadly neglected; their thoughts I had not studied; their mental attributes I had not troubled about. My chief desire in connection with them was to accumulate that which might be of service to them when I had passed away.

Oh! father, oh! mother, there is no accumulation of riches so powerful and so true to connect you with your children as purity and love. United by these attachments you will be embraced by Nature's sweet and soft belts, whose electric lights, in their brilliancy, will be kept constantly before you,

Digitized by Google

reminding you that the glorious tie which connects you with the loved ones can ne'er be severed, no matter how transcendent their spiritual existence may be. The links which connect father, mother, and children together, in these regions of glory beyond, are far more sublime and tenacious than aught you can imagine.

Associated with the first concourse of children which I attended to earth are incidents of the most iniquitous kind. Deep in the vaults of earth, where the sun's rays ne'er penetrated to reveal the light of day, and from whence the sounds of their shrieks could not be heard by ears above, many of these tender ones had become victims of the most diabolical murders. Under the shadow of "religion" many of these innocent ones had been summarily ushered into eternity! a gain, in some respects, doubtless, to them; but (dreadful to think!) what a terrible looming up of an inevitable doom awaits the perpetrators of such atrocities! Inevitable, I say, but not eternal; for, clothed though many of those pious hypocrites be in the darkest vestments of sin, even in their case improvement will follow upon repentance for their crimes, and continued exertion to progress to a brighter state. "Though your sins be as scarlet yet will they be washed white as wool" may be true in a certain sense, but it may take centuries upon centuries of suffering to eradicate those guilty stains. There is no escape from the unerring balance of Divine justice by any process of instantaneous forgiveness. On the other side of the "dark stream" God's laws do operate, for that stream is not the boundary of His dominions, or the *Ultima Thule* of Nature, and on their advent to spiritual and everlasting life no barriers will interpose to prevent them divesting themselves of those vile vestments which enshroud them. But to effect this long and patient labour will be necessary—continued efforts of self-denial, perseverance in the manifestation of love, deeds of unselfish

Digitized by Google

kindness and mercy will have to be brought into requisition to accomplish the desired end. Little do those who have participated in the crime of infanticide, whether as principals or accomplices, think of the awful condemnation awaiting them when those living witnesses whom they have sent into eternity will meet them face to face!

Such are the laws of Nature that retributive justice must have its rights, and that parent and child must, in time, know each other in the Eternal Beyond, no matter what the circumstances may have been appertaining to the parentage—whether the offspring be born in or out of what you term the bonds of wedlock—recognition eventually ensues, and every wrong must be requited.

I would you could see one of those bands of children returning to earth. Just imagine yourselves as spirits stepping from earth's threshold upon the borders of spiritual life. When the clouds have gradually unfolded, among the hundreds of pictures which they have concealed, the spiritual observation beholds countless millions of children in one band returning to earth. Their dress is of purity, representing the various colours of the rainbow, which no artist's brush has succeeded in imitating. See how closely they move, as if they were bound in circles of gold—as if each form were interlinked by chains of the greatest strength. Thus, and leaning lovingly one upon the other, they return to the earth-sphere, nearing which a cloud seems to pass over them, perceptibly affecting them, and for a time leaving the young travellers dull and dreary. To become acquainted with their parents these loving children leave the ethereal sphere to encounter the murky atmosphere of earth, where they hope to link themselves with the affections of those whom they have left. Among the dense throng are to be observed some whom cruel fathers and mothers had helped to crush out from their earthly frames; and yet they would fain

Digitized by Google

seek the tender love of those who had made them wretched on earth! I see them look with fond love on those who had cruelly stamped them out from physical existence. I see them with fond affections clinging—affections of such fervour that neither man nor spirit could picture.

From this you will learn that, what you term natural affection, instead of being effaced from the spirit after its dissolution from the body, becomes intensified, and more worthy of an immortal being. Such are the laws of Nature as associated with the soul's affections.

Myriads of those little ones have been welcomed to the spiritual existence ere they had become developed sufficiently to know their fathers or mothers, as I explained in a former lecture.

(Here it became necessary to restore the Medium to his normal state; but after an interval sufficient to impart to him renewed vigour, the lecturer again spoke).

It is necessary for those children to become perfectly familiar with the phases of earth's existence, and to gain that knowledge which they should have acquired in the rudimentary sphere. Many, alas! have been cut off by agencies which are best known upon earth; and it is essential that those cruelly-used infants, before they can properly expand in their spiritual minds, should learn something of that life which they would have passed through had not the cord of their earthly existence been so suddenly and ruthlessly snapped.

Upon this lower sphere termed earth, where you are sojourning for a brief interval, as I have already stated, it is better that each individual should attain to maturity, and thence, step by step, inch by inch, for the body to naturally decline. Yes, it is more conducive to the immediate progress of the individual that he or she should here reach that age of maturity when a knowledge of the troubles and pleasures of earth will have been gained; and beside which they will, on

Digitized by Google

the attainment of such a desired end, have acquired personal experience of the laws which control and govern the physical body. As age advances upon an individual who pays due regard to both physical and spiritual culture, those laws will enable him to grasp a conception of THE GRAND REALITY—the crowning jewel—the mountain summit, and the glorious destiny of the race.

Oh! ye, who are weary of earth-life, and are tempted to usher yourselves unbidden into Eternity: I invoke ye to pause and contemplate upon the awful crisis to which a yielding to that temptation would lead ye. For in those spheres beyond—on those lands unmeasured—I have seen those who have passed away by their own hands, who have entered upon those borders as strangers, unnoticed and unwelcomed. They are devoid of one enriching thought to glow in their minds, they see the gloomy present. Continual aspirations after good, combined with the mellowing hand of time, are required to translate them to a brighter state: they have been the architects of their own destiny: they have chosen their own rewards, and great is their sorrow and remorse.

What a terrible power seems to control those who have violently snapped the ties which united their spirits to their mortal tenements! Dark and dreary, indeed, is the advent into spirit-life of him who has made that advent as a suicide, thereby having usurped the prerogative of Him who gave that life for a definite time, and for a wise purpose beyond man's ken.

In reference to young children who have preceded their parents to spirit-life, it may be asked, "Do they ever become affinitized with those parents in the Eternal Hereafter?" After the lapse of a vast amount of time many children do. Some there are who, from being in affinity with their parents, and the latter worthy of their innocent love, rejoin them immediately on their entry into spiritual life. But there are

Digitized by Google

others who, apparently, have not the slightest latent affinity for their earthly father or mother. What may occur in the mighty Future in regard to the creation of an affinity in such cases I venture no opinion. In the meantime the spiritual foster mother becomes so united to the child, who has gone before its parents to the ethereal existence, that they are seldom separated: they seem to grow together, and are so enveloped in the same aura or spiritual air that they may be seen traversing the magnetic paths as one being. The little one becomes subject to the highest culture, and immersed in the most sublime love—phases of culture and love unspeakable.

I implore you to cherish and regard with care and love the little forms that are around you, for they conceal divine sparks—sparks that may smoulder for a time, but which will eventually be fanned to a transcendent effulgence.

"Away! thou children, to thy spiritual homes—retrace those luminous paths which lead to thy refulgent abodes. At intervals return to earth and knowledge gain of those laws which enable spirits to hold converse with those who are yet to become such. Thy circle is perfect, thy harmony complete; then haste back to the regions of bliss."

I will now draw your attention to a capacious hall where a large collection of books was deposited upon supports constructed in a different manner to any of earth. Each volume was chastely and elegantly bound, and marked by figures that were very distinct. I remember having described to you my passing through a beautiful library in a lower sphere, but this of which I now speak far outstripped it in beauty.

Seated around what appeared to be an immense table were numbers of students, perusing, with all the depth of spiritual intellect, the pages of the books which were open before them.

Digitized by Google

I ventured to accost one of the students thus: "I wish to learn something concerning these great volumes I see around me—I wish to learn more of the spiritual state. Canst thou teach me?" Before speaking, or even casting his spiritual glance upon me, he drew me aside, when he said: "Friend, behold here," pointing to the volumes, "a source whence you can extract the sweetest milk and honey. If you upon the path of knowledge are determined to tread I will gladly accompany and assist you." Here a strange sensation quickly came o'er me, and, turning I beheld my valued Jewish friend, and said: "What brought you here? Hast thou come to study with this spiritual band? Is thy soul animated with a desire to drink of the knowledge which lies concealed in those books?" Without replying to either of these questions, he quietly said, "Introduce me." Ere I had time to make a movement preparatory to complying with his request, each occupant of the numerous seats at the expansive table arose, and thus my friend was, as he wished, introduced.

The student, to whom I had introduced myself, then said: "When you have acquired sufficient knowledge to qualify you as a teacher you can return to earth, and, through the channels recently opened out, impart to mankind somewhat more than they have hitherto learned concerning the deeper mysteries of their being."

Entering as a student I soon learned that chemistry was destined to play a conspicuous part in the intercourse that was now being initiated between the spiritual and physical worlds. It was here that I became more intimately acquainted with the laws that govern the flesh, and in my endeavours to acquire the knowledge essential to my undertaking I am indebted to the kindness of friends, and more especially to my ever affectionate brother Robinson, whom I first met in the library alluded to.

Digitized by Google

Before bidding you good night let me say as follows :

We awake with symphonious music vibrating in our ears. Our souls are gradually approaching nigher to Thee, Thou great and mighty Father. Our forms seem to expand in size and grow more beautiful as we come into Thy encircling harmony. As we become more purified in Thy higher realms we inherit from Thee a larger portion of Thy love and wisdom. Thy golden circle, oh ! Father, emits rays of light, which beam upon all Thy creatures.

The flesh is weak, the spirit is poor compared to Thee, from whose power and wisdom have proceeded every vestige of Thy boundless universe. The unimagined expanse of Thy illimitable realms (unimagined and illimitable by man's comprehension) is replete with Thy light. Thy countless worlds, as they with precision and rapidity revolve in the orbits assigned them, seem to make obeisance to Thee ; and all spirits who are animated by progressive desires shine forth with gladness to know that they possess one small spark, derived from Thee, oh ! Father. A ray from Thy refulgent light is in our forms, and in everything that man can possibly behold, that spirit can possibly grasp. Gratefully we thank Thee, oh ! merciful One, that our righteousness is a reward—not miraculously bestowed, but diligently acquired by our own efforts in accordance with Thine unerring laws. Good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XXXVIII.

DELIVERED 17TH JULY, 1875.

GOOD EVENING. Thy spiritual Light, Oh! Father, sends forth its glory and its truth to all the earth as well as to the spiritual spheres beyond. Teach us to study and obey Thy laws: enrich us with the harmony of Thy Being, and mercifully look upon us as Thou ever hast done. Neither prayers, invocations, nor the cold forms of "religion" do affect Thee; but the offering of a fervent tribute of gratitude to Thee tends to elevate the nature of him who invokes Thy name. On Thy mighty footstool of Nature all creation glorifies Thee; naught originating from man can affect Thee. Obedience by Thy creatures to the laws which Thou hast spread o'er all is the most acceptable homage they can pay Thee.

We are drawn, through Thee, Oh! Father, by the connecting links of affinity, of purity, and of truth; and we are cheered by the certainty that our earnest endeavours will qualify us to become more worthy of being nearer to Thee in goodness and in truth.

As we traverse the paths of Eternity, Oh! Father, grant that we may show by our deeds that we are mindful of the great and glorious blessings Thou hast bestowed upon us.

I purpose to-night drawing your attention to incidents that occurred in connection with the spirit whom you know by the name of Robinson.

It was in that hall where books were made use of to accumulate knowledge of a multifarious character: in that vast library, studded with books of every description—treating

Digitized by Google

of Nature's divine secrets, and all the arts and sciences—I first came in contact with our estimable friend, Robinson, as I have already observed. I was then studying a book on the controlling of Mediums; for it was the height of my ambition to find and cultivate an organization through which I could speak to the people of earth: that I might, by a power unknown to them, pour upon them a light of which the generality of them had hitherto been ignorant. The desire of my soul was on this one object.

It is impossible for you to imagine the feelings which animated me when I was first greeted by him who subsequently became my cherished friend—when he took me by the arm and warmly expressed sympathy and participation in the object I had in view. "I have observed you," he said, "and I share in the feelings which actuate you—in your desire to reveal to those who, upon that world designated as 'earth,' are in quest of the truth as known to us. When upon earth I received but little—comparatively little—education; but I was free to roam o'er its manifold scenes; and I lived there long enough to drink of the bitter as well as the sweet waters of 'life.' Will you accompany me to the world from which we both originated; for there I have found an organization adapted to your control—an organization which you can speak through?"

The difficulty did not cease with the discovery of the instrument, for I had yet to practise upon that instrument ere I could produce intelligent sounds. Although I had at times impressed a few instruments on earth with my sentiments, I had yet to familiarize myself with the laws of Nature which controlled the human mind when encased in matter. Surrounded as it seemed to be with difficulties, I yet felt that I could master the subject by practice.

My newly-acquired and much-esteemed friend informed me that he had been recently developing a Medium, but, for want

Digitized by Google

of a knowledge of the spiritual existence, he did not possess the language necessary to pass the thoughts through his organization. "Thou, friend," he said, "like the philosopher's stone, hast been hidden from my spiritual observation; at length, I see in thee the spark which seems to illuminate and make the darkness clear and beautiful as the light. I will examine you and see what lies beneath the surface. . . . . Thou art a gem which, with its sparkle, draws me to you. In thee I have found the rock—the stepping-stone on which to climb and reach the sympathies of the human family."

He led me forth past thousands of students of both sexes, in each of whom I could perceive the pleasing animation of the soul as it wrought in harmony with the spirit in the acquisition of knowledge. It was not solely for themselves they laboured, for their universal love inspired them with the hope and desire of benefiting all beneath their spiritual plane when their course of studies was accomplished.

The scene changed, and, with it, the appearance of my companion, who had attained to a glorious brilliancy, and who seemed to enter into my soul. Drawing me to a corner of the colossal library he took down from the support upon which it rested a large volume of an imposing and yet simple appearance. "The ancients," he said, "have stamped in this book subtle recollections or vivid impressions of occultism which they had acquired. Turn over its pages, and imbibe for yourself."

I took the book, expecting to encounter no little difficulty in comprehending its contents, but my higher faculties had then become developed to such a degree that a brief space of time sufficed to enable me to acquire a knowledge of the laws pertaining to flesh and blood, of which the book treated. Redolent with harmony in its composition the subject of the volume, while engaged upon it, had riveted my attention.

Digitized by Google

After I had accomplished my self-imposed and pleasing task I turned towards my friend, who cheerfully said: "To earth now we will go, and the desire of thy soul can soon be gratified. In thy first essays to govern my earthly instrument those who have witnessed my endeavours to do so shall judge you cannot control flesh better than myself."

To a lonely, desolate, uncouth place—as some of you, perhaps, would term it—we went. Night was watching o'er the earth. The clouds were weeping copious tears, a condition unfavourable for our purpose. (The inclemency of the weather is prejudicial to spiritual manifestations, which appears not to be understood, except by very few of earth's inhabitants; but as the philosophy of spiritualism progresses, and becomes *fashionable*, more light will be thrown upon the subject.)

Kindly attended by my friend I came to a lonely and dreary locality. Doubtless, for others, it had its charms, but I, who had been accustomed to something more sublime, grand, and glorious—enlightening the inner spiritual mind—failed to perceive anything æsthetic in the surroundings.

As nearer to earth we drew, my difficulties appeared to increase; and I felt inclined, like the lazy savage in his canoe, to let the tide drift me as it would. But to earth I came once more; and shaking off the feeling engendered by thoughts of the difficulties before me, and summoning all my energies to the task, I entered an apartment and again stood face to face with those who moved on the planet where once I moved in a similar manner.

My friend drew me close to the "circle" which had been formed; and as I was observing the blending of the aura from the members of the circle, my attention was directed to a spiritual atmosphere, whose influence acted like a charm upon me—releasing me from the uncouth spell which had almost bound me. In the immediate vicinity of the rear of one of

Digitized by Google

the sitters I was attracted; and as there I stood I saw the magnetic influence pass from one to another in an unbroken chain, as I stated in a former lecture.

The individual at whose back I placed myself seemed, as it were, imbibing the power from the circle, which was imparting to him a transient strength by which the invisible influence might be enabled to perform its work. As this individual was then in process of developing as a Medium, it was deemed essential that the members of the circle should place their hands upon the table around which they were seated, so that a connecting current might be formed thereby. This connecting current is called "animal magnetism"—one of the media by which we of the ethereal world are enabled to hold commune with you of the physical. As the circle gradually develops, and Nature's secrets become unfolded, the power increases, and the animal magnetism flows truly and plainly along the chain which has been formed.

Proceeding from the frame of each sitter now present in this circle, is an emanation as palpable to my sense of sight as is that frame to your senses; and that emanation forms a dense circle of magnetic light. It links each sitter together with others whom you cannot perceive; but the focus of this magnetic light is the Medium who acts—in this respect—the part of a sponge, and attracts the magnetism from both right and left. The chest—not the head, as some imagine—of the Medium is the focus to which the magnetic power from the circle tends. From the chest it streams and circulates around the Medium, in close contact with whom stand the operating spirits; who, through this aura and the organization, have the power of corresponding with earth's inhabitants in a manner perhaps as yet somewhat unsatisfactory and indifferent; but still (though frequently their notes are discordant in consequence of the imperfections of the instrument), they can at times send forth sweet music.

Digitized by Google

My friend made a few passes around the Medium's brain, which had the effect of inducing a dreamy or drowsy state. This state can be produced in persons of a sympathetic or sensitive nature, and thus they can be reduced to a condition of perfect passivity. They who choose to study the laws connected with their being can readily ascertain if they possess this faculty, which is the stepping stone to mediumship. The cultivation of this faculty leads to a phase which affords an opportunity for spiritual agencies to step in and play a part. Prior to that phase the subject may successfully cast off any spiritual influence; but the crisis once attained, the invisible intelligences possess the power of utilising the cultivated organization. With a slight exercise of your imaginations you might imagine my difficulty when I was brought in contact with the Medium—surrounded, as I was, by such a novel atmosphere, which had the effect of obscuring my vision.

A repetition of the mesmeric or magnetic passes from my friend gradually induced a profound slumber in the Medium, who, however, was not reduced to that state so quietly as he now is, for then distortions of the countenance and contortions of the body—from which issued a cold perspiration—preceded the comatose state. I was unable to see the spirit of the Medium, but, as far as I could observe, it appeared to rest upon, what looked like, a dark blue magnetic wave. My friend instantly requested me to take possession. I did so, and I can assure you, friends, that it seemed to me passing strange that I, a spirit of the vast and mighty Universe, should once more possess a physical organism that I could influence, though in a different manner to that which I could my own fleshly body when on earth.

When the first strange sensations had subsided I began to perceive, although somewhat obscurely, all those who were around me, but, after having become reconciled to my novel

Digitized by Google

position, what failed me most were the organs of speech, which I could only influence to utter a few disconnected words. My attempts at intelligible utterance may be likened to the voice of the wind in its passage through the foliage of the trees—inefficient to arouse one responsive thought in man's mind. I was like a child among strangers, and as I tried to play on the notes they seemed to respond, "I cannot play to-day."

I spoke to my friend of my inability to produce any intelligent effect. "These organs," he said, "can be operated upon successfully only by practice, and although at present they respond not to your anxious appeal, yet they will in time, and by your exertions, express the thoughts and ambition of your spiritual life."

Such was my friend's prediction, which has been verified, if not to my soul's content in both particulars, yet in a fair way towards it. During my brief connection with the subject through whom I am now addressing you the conviction has been forced upon me that through similar channels (highly developed) will eventually be conveyed to mankind a larger and more lucid knowledge of the next phase of their existence.

Through the debilitated organs of this Medium, oh! Giver of all good, I briefly express the sentiments of my soul, which expands to Thee with every breath that I inhale of Thy great life. From the depths of my spiritual existence I fervently thank Thee for Thy innumerable blessings, among the last of which is the opportunity afforded me of treading these magnetic paths to correspond with earth's people, and thereby help to strike the priestly fetters from those in the flesh.

Oh! Father, we approach Thee with all reverence, for we are robed in Nature's truths, and tiaras, emblematic of immortal life, do crown our brows. We dwell upon Thee, for we receive from Thy gushing fountains eternal truth and glory. And as we gradually become purified so do our

Digitized by Google

thoughts become more intellectual, until at length we lean altogether upon Thee.

Amidst the multiplicity of scenes through which I have traversed I have beheld bright and glorious signs of Thy immortality, Thou great and beneficent Being, all centring themselves in the creature called man, whose soul must burst from the trammels of earth, and draw strength from Thee, oh! Father, thus lifting it to a higher standard, purifying the thoughts and freeing them from the mazes of doubt which have beset them.

The signs are pregnant with promise for the race, so much so that we look forward with hope and faith to the time when Thou wilt, oh! gracious Being, connect earth and spheres with a magnetic bridge so plain that every soul encased in mortality will be enabled to perceive the glorious approach to the further side. Such a sublime perception, oh! Father, will illumine the regions of earth—uniting mankind in harmony and love, and making them to see that the principle of progression pervades the existence beyond, that all change is gradual and connected, and that Thy divine laws are undeviating.

Continue to encircle us, Thou omnipotent One, with Thy everlasting love, and aid us, we implore Thee, in our endeavours to sustain and cheer those who have yet to traverse the mighty spheres of Eternity. Enshrine our hearts and souls in love and mercy, and guide us with Thy great and mighty power. We pray Thee, make to mankind the path of life, which to them appears so thorny, one flowery bed, and animate them with aspirations to attain to a nearer approach towards Thee. Good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XXXIX.

DELIVERED 17TH AUGUST, 1875.

GOOD EVENING. Absence,* I perceive, has not diminished your good feelings with regard to the lectures. The further we advance in spiritual life the more enlightened we become, and the freer are our paths strewn with simple adornments; but, though simple in array, they are still ever more beautiful and glorious.

The higher the mind soars the brighter are the jewels of inspiration which descend upon it. Exalted attainments and a love for the good and beautiful can never walk hand in hand with uncouth passions: there is no spiritual kinship between noble emotions and debased emotions—the mind animated by the latter cannot appreciate the society of one stirred by the former. It cannot imbibe from the same stream which flows for the pure and just. He that enjoys high attainments seeks the company of those who aim high and drink at the true fountains of knowledge and life—those intellectual streams whose sparkling realities present an irresistible attraction to the earnest truth-seeker. The higher he attains in knowledge the greater becomes his desire for more sublime things, until, in the more advanced stages of his progress, he has glimpses which reveal a purer atmosphere

* From the evening when the preceding discourse had been given, up to the date when this lecture was uttered, there had intervened a period of three weeks, during which the Medium had enjoyed freedom from control for lecturing purposes: an abstention from which was deemed necessary for his health.

Digitized by Google

and brighter sky than those of earth, or of the other spheres he may have passed through.

It is in that sphere designated as the Summer Land where perfect harmony is first realised between the soul and the spirit, where the myriad beings who were once inhabitants of a mundane sphere are emulous in the performance of glorious actions, which have been inspired by a higher source—beings whose looks are chaste and beautiful, because their characters have been purified, and whose countenances are ever becoming more handsome and perfect, for there the progressed and progressing spirit is revived by the bloom of youth. The more elevated the plane of the spirit the more lovely is the outward appearance of that spirit, the thoughts of whose transparent soul can be read as clearly as can the plainest of type. The crown or head piece of such a spirit is formed of good actions, whose splendour throws out a brilliant light. The apparel worn by many in that sphere is beautifully fine in texture, and resplendent in colour. Such garments, however, are rarely used by spirits on their return to earth, where they assume a garb by which (in the hope of meeting with seers or seeresses) they can be readily recognised by the friends and acquaintances to whom they wish to be made known. The spiritual robes hang in exquisite gracefulness from the figure which, in keeping with the mind, becomes more beautiful and perfect than when on earth. None of the lower spirits, or those who have not progressed, can possibly enter this charmed circle, for a spirit can only consociate with spirits who resemble himself; he can only feel at home with those who are in harmony with his nature. The magnetic emanations from the soul of every spirit are fraught with influences of which you can entertain little conception.

In that sphere of harmony and love I visited a garden, the vast dimensions of which I shall not attempt to picture to you. It will be sufficient for me to say that the trees and

Digitized by Google

shrubbery were in beautifully arranged order, and from their foliage and limbs proceeded a radiance of inexpressible loveliness. Every tree and shrub appeared as if animated by intelligence, and endowed with a language of mutual communication, and they seemed to have gained a sentient reality in that bright sphere, for a pure halo hung around every tree. "You need not fear to touch me, for thy contact will not harm me," each of those sensitive trees seemed to say. Everything there has a language susceptible of intelligence to every denizen of that blest abode—a language which those below that sphere of progress are unable to understand.

Then, as far as the spiritual sight could reach, were to be perceived the most enchanting scenes: halls of unspeakable grandeur, mountains of what might be termed gold intermingled with silver and rubies. All Creation appeared to join in one vast and mighty voice in gratitude and thanksgiving to the beneficent Author of all: with a voice of music that appealed with ecstatic thrill to every spirit's soul.

I saw children who seemed to have assembled from all parts of this sphere for the purpose of being instructed. They were arranged in accord with their statures and actions, and in bands of many thousands in each. The children of each band were arrayed after that fashion which upon earth you term the Lyceum: the origination of which institution with you is to be credited to information received from the Fifth Sphere or the Summer Land.

The colours of every group or band were significant or symbolical. Robed in blue were twice ten thousand children being exercised in the manner prescribed by the Lyceum system. Separated by a little space was another band of youthful spirits as numerous as those just mentioned; but they were distinguished by being dressed in red robes streaked with bright green. Many more groups were there assembled

Digitized by Google

each marked by its appropriate colour with its banners and flags It would occupy more time than the Medium's state of health will allow to describe all which I there saw worthy of description. I learned that the children are periodically formed into a grand camp, where Nature's bountiful gifts are bestowed upon them.

The vocal strains from the united voices of those several bands of children were dulcet and enchanting. The sweet and happy music, together with the floating of the variegated banners in the heavenly breeze, as well as the diverse colours of the various groups, combined to form a scene which no human language can adequately describe.

There, perhaps, a mother has searched for a loved one from whom she had been separated upon earth; and her search having been rewarded, the light of love illumines her brow as she fondly enfolds her child in her arms as of old; and now she feels certain that she is recompensed for all the sufferings which had clung around her physical motherhood. 'Tis a graceful and grateful scene—a scene of Nature's grandest representations.

I was afterwards conducted to a part of this sphere where the study of the arts and sciences was pursued: where painting, chemistry, mathematics, astronomy, mechanics, were the chosen studies of innumerable spirits; each of whom, in his desire to achieve the mastery of the subject upon which he was engaged, was actuated by love for the progress of mankind, who will eventually be benefited by the studies and discoveries of each spirit; for, as I have before said, all that is now known upon earth had been previously acquired in the spheres, whence, by spiritual influx, and in due course, such knowledge had been transmitted to mankind, through receptive organisms on the same line of thought.

It may be objected that this is an unwise revelation to make—unwise, because some, accepting it without reservation,

Digitized by Google

are prone to become supine, thinking that spiritual influx will anticipate them apart from all exertion by themselves. To those I would say: Faculties are given you, and it is absolutely imperative that you utilise them. If you do not, if you allow them to remain in abeyance, you fail—not in your duty to God—but to yourself and mankind at large, and also to the generations that come after you. If everyone on earth were to sleep, and seek not the path of progress, what would become of the race? It would, ere long, be like a pool whose stagnant waters lie corrupt for the want of a fresh and gentle breeze to renovate them.

Every part of God's universe—the mundane as well as the spiritual—is instinct with the principle of progression, the most prominent type of which (to the eyes of man) is the vegetable kingdom—the germ, the plant or tree, the blossom, and then the fruit—such are significant emblems of Nature's mode of progress, and it is the bounden duty of the being who is the summit of physical evolution to second or further the design of creation by exercising to the utmost the gifts bestowed upon him by the beneficent Creator or Evolver. Above a certain plane or sphere in that world which is invisible to you each spirit clearly perceives, and devoutly complies with the mandates of Nature. Progress is the watchword of every developed and developing spirit, and for the attainment of the end in view each one works lovingly and assiduously for the benefit of the other.

(At this point of the discourse the lecturer released his control, but at the expiry of about twenty minutes the Medium was again entranced, when the lecture was resumed):

I have visited the worlds which revolve around the same luminary as does this world of earth, and upon some, which to you look like little diamonds, are beings superior to and in advance of those of this globe, both socially, morally, intellectually and spiritually; but upon others I found

Digitized by Google

creatures of a lower grade, for they are inferior to mankind of earth in every one of those respects. Upon each and upon all, however—upon the superior as well as the inferior beings—I clearly perceived sure and certain signs of progress, that powerful lever that is destined to lift the creature nigher the perfection of the Creator.

As re-formation follows upon formation, so will progress be, as it ever has been, the motive to invention. Not going beyond the limits of man's inventive power (as an instance of progressive tendencies), think what an advance has been made, in a comparatively short time, in acquiring a knowledge of the natural sciences. In my time upon earth things which you habitually use, and consider as absolute essentials to every-day life, were not thought of. Typography, or the art of printing, was introduced to earth's people only two or three generations prior to the period when I first saw the light of your sun, yet what an important and beneficent part it has played in that brief space of time!—enabling the thirsty soul to drink of the waters of knowledge to an extent which would have been impossible in the absence of that art.

Think you that the inventive genius of the race is exhausted? Not so; there will be in the future even greater advancement in every branch of knowledge than there has been in the recent past. That which you look upon with wonder will become quite familiar to your children. That which affords you easy communication with your friends in a distant part of the globe, which enables you to transmit your thoughts to and from the southern and northern hemispheres, will yet be surpassed by an easier and more rapid transmission in the near future.

There is more in a streak of sunshine than is thought of on earth. Permeating the common light of day exists a force whose influence, when brought into requisition, will create a revolution in some of your existing states of things. Light is

Digitized by Google

a power which one day will attain a development of which no man has any conception. Stored in the mighty granary of the earth's atmosphere are riches undreamt of by your keenest intellects; but, prompted by unseen and more expanded intelligences, the votaries of science will gradually unlock the secrets of that vast storehouse whose supply can ne'er be exhausted.

In a portion of the Summer Land there are learned spirits engaged upon certain subjects, the perfecting of which requires the exclusion of light. I was conducted to a locality where photography was the absorbing study, and where the darkness to you would seem curious. It was there that spiritual photography, which is yet destined to be the means of demonstrating the reality of the despised pneumatological philosophy, first emanated. The students are bending all their energies to the task of attaining perfection in the art, and the flowers of their learning they are certain of scattering over the gardens of eternity, and their labours will eventuate in a brilliant light being shed o'er the earth. I must now bid you good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XL.

DELIVERED 24TH AUGUST, 1875.

GOOD EVENING.

Roll on, thou bright orb in shining array ;
Let thy life-glow be felt on earth ev'ry day,
Let thy light shine on man in beauty and love.
As knowledge descends from the bright spheres above.
Oh ! Father, bedew us with Thy divine grace,
That we Thy free love around us may trace ;
Embellish our souls with Truth's purest ray,
That all may press on to a far brighter day.

Oh ! infinite and eternal Father of all, Thou art beyond the comprehension of man or spirit, yet we ever feel Thy divine presence near us. Lead us, Oh ! Father, with Thy finger of love to the gushing streams of spiritual knowledge, where our thirsting souls may be refreshed with the waters of Thy eternal and never-drying springs.

(The above invocation is but a small portion of that which was offered on the evening of the above date. While the invocation was being uttered, the Medium's face was turned away from the Reporter, the latter, consequently, was unable to take down the whole of it.)

In my last lecture I spoke of what might be termed the department of scientific work and study. It is there where the philosophic minds that have passed from earth are clustered together, and disclose the gems of knowledge which have been so long enshrouded in mystery. It was there that I became instructed in and guided by the beneficent laws which govern spirits in all their radiant light, a knowledge of which aids them to instruct mankind.

Digitized by Google

Like the fish confined by the stream, man is confined by the stream of earthly life. But the spirit awakes into the inner-life with no such limitations around it.

In reference to spirit photography—the art of depicting upon a material surface that which is invisible to the physical sight—I ascertained that it had been brought in that sphere to a state which when related will scarcely be credited by some. I have seen a striking likeness in every point and form—with all the beautiful outlines of the figure—taken of one living upon this planet: an exact similitude of the spirit has been photographed while the grosser part has been lying dormant, and a vivid picture has been impressed and now adorns the walls wherein dwell some ancient and noble spirits.

Such is an instance of the advance made in photography. But let me lead you further on.

From that grade a more comprehensive spiritual view can be taken of those vast orbs which from the standpoint of earth appear so minute. I saw not only above me but below me, as you would say, mighty worlds, in obedience to the glorious laws which control them, revolving around their great centre—the luminary, whose rays impart life to everything upon the face of each of these rolling globes. Each world with its attendant satellites was distinctly perceivable, and the roads or paths thereto seemed opened to me.

The surveys which the astronomers of earth have been enabled to make of the Universe embrace but an insignificant portion of the mighty whole, for beyond the field of their telescopes are ten thousand times ten thousand worlds revolving, each in the orbit assigned it, with majestic grandeur, around their centre of attraction.

In the Summer Land I have met with many spirits who, while upon earth, had acquired a scant knowledge of the heavenly bodies. I have seen others who had been summarily dismissed to spirit-life for having been outspoken—for having

Digitized by Google

been solicitous of enlightening the ignorance of their fellows regarding the motion of the globe to which they were confined.

The expiring throes of that mental thraldom which essayed to suppress the aspiration of your earth's brightest intellects have happily passed, and now, in this respect, there is no subordination to the doctrines of a domineering church. You have profound cause for gratulation that the mental shackles have been snapped, and that you can give expression to your thoughts without fear, as in byegone days, of being placed upon the rack and tortured to the verge of death. Gushing streams of truth and knowledge have quickly followed upon mental enfranchisement—those sparkling streams that had been so long penned up by a designing and despotic priesthood. A victim of that order I held converse with in the grade of which I have made mention. His name I will not disclose, but those who are interested in the subject will readily conjecture to whom I refer. He was a genius too bright for his contemporaries. He possessed an intellectual power, the utilisation of which for the benefit of his fellow men was denied him by the despots and bigots of his day. For asserting the truth respecting the motion of the earth, what to him did they do? Even to death's door they brought him in an attempt to shackle "his ungodly mouth." But he arose from the torture with his perception undimmed, and the retention of the same opinion regarding the motion of the planets.

"My friend," he said to me, "I now move amid the sublimity which I once could only contemplate from a distance. I now perceive and enjoy the glorious realities. These gems, which are called stars where once I was confined in the vesture of mortality, I now can perceive do mark the path of usefulness. These orbs, which to me then looked as little twinkling stars, are seen by me now as mighty worlds, the magnitude of some of which greatly surpasses that of the one

Digitized by Google

that gave me birth. You may think it strange that even while my soul was limited to the range of earth I had occasional glimpses of and communion with my spiritual brethren."

Here, by some influence unknown to me, he opened a channel by which we passed to the polar seas of our native globe. Cold and glassy-looking icebergs, with wild and uncouth animals prowling around, were prominent features of the scene. Barriers of ice for many miles skirted the inhospitable shore. But what think you I saw beyond? A spiritual bridge connecting earth with the ethereal world!—Yes, a link associating earth with the spiritual existence!—a bridge knit by a thousand stars of light which point a way and make a path for man to tread, and by which earth and heaven will be blended. Oh! would that you could expand your souls and see the forms (that have become associated in your minds with death) fleeting to and fro with dazzling glory and brightness along that connecting bridge.

(The Medium was here suddenly released from the trance, and a respite of several minutes occurred).

Oh! Jerusalem, even with thy olden traditions enshrouded and encircled by thy martyrs, thou fallest, and like the stone in its passage down the steep we merely hear the rumbling of thy decadency. Thy prestige doth vanish from my memory as I traverse the luminous paths that lead to unnumbered worlds. The very thought doth pass away like a shadow, as I look upon the mighty action that rules and regulates those countless globes. The bible shackles with which when upon earth I was fettered, have long since fallen from me, and with the emancipation there beamed upon me the light of the glorious reality.*

* Happily the vast eclipse of the light of truth which, through priestly intrigue, cast its shadow over many philosophic minds in the past, has of late years begun to pass away, and a new and brighter era to dawn on the world.

Digitized by Google

To the freed and enlightened spirit, it seems marvellous that some of the bright intellects of earth should still be degraded by the parasitic subtleties of doctrine appertaining to what is falsely termed religion, which teaches that the Great Ruler is an implacable despot, whose wrath is as a consuming fire. The winter of such a debasing religion has too long maintained dominion over a large portion of the earth ; but there is gently wafting onward the fragrance of a spring which will be the harbinger of a summer to displace for ever by its eternal effulgence the frigid season that has retarded the mental and spiritual growth of the race. It will usher in a reign of Love, of Peace, of Mercy, of Charity—a gentle spirit —the herald of virtue, the disseminator of happiness. Under such a dynasty this world's inhabitants will adhere closer to the example of the amiable Nazarene, whom millions of Christians have vainly professed to imitate and to serve. The theology that now boasts of its "orthodoxy" will ere long dissolve before the warmth of that summer whose spring-time is coming upon you, and it will be replaced by a doctrine inculcating the well-founded belief that the Creator will be best served by His creatures when they lovingly emulate each other in the performance of good deeds. The progress of the spirit confined in its earthly temple is necessarily slow : the growth of the soul cannot be forced : the link connecting soul and matter should be viewed with consideration and reverence. A proper conception, on the part of man, of mind, soul and matter, will reconcile him to the truth of spiritual phenomena occurring under the universal reign of an immutable order of things. The laws suffusing the Universe are an enigma to man : he is, as it were, just stepping upon the precincts of knowledge : a clearer insight into the arcana of Nature will reveal to him the profundity of the glorious array. Attaining a certain point he will emerge into the higher delights of learning, and begin to drink at the fountain of

Digitized by Google

such knowledge as will convincingly prove to him that one of the chief of the Father's eternal laws is that of Progress, and that his spiritual and intellectual aspirations can attain satisfaction only in a progressive condition: the enjoyment of which involves the exercise of thought, reflection, reason, energy. God's design will then be manifest, viz., that man must seek what is to benefit him—that he must earn ere he receives.

Instinct teaches you that your faculties if not properly utilised are liable to deterioration: that use is absolutely requisite to their growth. Intuition alone, perhaps, of all the sentient faculties may be absolved from the same law; for, doubtless, you will have observed that in individuals whose reason has been dethroned intuition has retained its seat: it adheres tenaciously and appears inviolable.

In the lower animals instinct (allied in an inferior degree to intuition—which is a higher development) is, as a rule, more unerring than the relative faculty in man, who is not so dependant, as are the inferior animals upon that particular endowment.

Instinct is a conspicuous and all-important gift to the animals below man. Now, think you, that the instinct of the brute, whose body has succumbed to the imperious call of death, has been annihilated or extinguished—that it, too, has met its death? No; think not so; for its transference to another and higher state ensues upon the fall of the body to which it lately inhered. Instinct rises up from the moth to the bird; and from the bird by gradations, to other descriptions of animal life.

From the lower instincts of the animal creation to the sublime attributes of the mind of man is a wide leap. But Nature, in her procedures, makes no leaps: she works with subtlety, and (to the perception of the short-lived mortal) her proceedings are imperceptible.

Digitized by Google

Mind is the reflection of the soul's action on the spirit. Soul is the divine spark engrafted in the flesh. This spark is indelibly stamped upon the being prior to the birth of the body by that Mystic Hand which controls the Universe.

Spirit is the true garment, the covering of the soul; for who would imagine that such a glorious particle was created to be sent forth in stupid nakedness? It is a plant too tender for the cold and bitter winds. The spirit expands within the frame until that frame has yielded to the mandate of death: the soul and spirit then are bound and interwoven in electric currents and commence their eternal co-partnership in a more expanded sphere.

Such are the knittings—taking them in a broad light—of spirit, soul and body. At some future time, when I have left you, you will receive more enlightenment upon those subjects but as my time at present is short I must speed over the remainder of my discourse.

In a previous lecture I gave you to understand that in the sphere which I am endeavouring to describe there is what may be termed a centre where all the glorious lights of affinity are bound in one: it may be designated as the cynosure of the Summer Land around which hallowed influences ever linger.

I can never hope to picture to you the ineffable beauty and splendour of that blissful and felicitous centre of attraction: it is too glorious to depict—too sublime to realise by those who have yet to look upon it.

Everything around it is symbolical of love—the gracious spirit of love there pervades all—the soul animating the system of that lustrous centre is the gentle spirit of love, that endureth all things. The rippling streams even appear to carry soft messages of love. The scene, to all who look upon it, imparts the tranquil assurance that a Wisdom immaculate and ineffable presides o'er all.

Digitized by Google

'Tis strange! But strangeness is the fringe of Nature's curtains. Strangeness or mystery surrounds our being—we leave it not behind us when we bid adieu to our rudimentary state. We are still surrounded by it; for, although many things that were an enigma to us, while we were subject to the physical frame, have become plain to us, still, as a principle of gradual progression pervades the entire economy of the Universe, the spirit while traversing the pleasant and progressive path perceives mystery to mark its every step, and that occult something which is as yet beyond the conception of the advancing spirit ever acts as an incentive to spur him on in the upward path.

Every physical world peopled with sentient beings possesses a centre relatively similar to the one of earth's Summer Land. Through those centres the Supreme Being mediately works.

Cast thine eyes eastward in the morning and see the fiery-looking orb apparently from its ocean-bed arising. See how it steers its course through the boundless vault of the ethereal firmament, dispersing the clouds beneath it which hover o'er the earth.

As the great luminary—the centre of the system to which this planet, a mere speck in immensity, belongs—seemingly ascends, so all nature in that system is cheered by its vivifying rays. Those beams, which permeate the abysmal depths of space, illumine and fructify the many worlds of which it is the attraction; they animate all in that system, and in them the spark from Him who is the Ruler and Governor of all is contained.

Oh! Father, we need not offer tributes to Thee. It is needless to ask blessings from Thee, for Thy light and love ever shine upon us. We know it—we feel it; for they are so bountifully bestowed that none can dispute—none can deny the pleasing truth. Mankind, oh! Father, are like shells tossed about by the breakers of strife; but we know that Thy

Digitized by Google

infinite love will gradually draw the scattered shells into a haven of rest. We can drink of Thy pearly waters without any fear of being tossed hither and thither. We look to Thee as the one great Light who will illumine our pathway through eternity. Good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XLI.

DELIVERED 27TH AUGUST, 1875.

GOOD EVENING. On the last occasion of addressing you, I spoke of the beautiful sight I beheld while moving in the ethereal atmosphere which surrounded my being in the immediate vicinity of the hill of all hills in the centre of that sublime sphere. In my endeavour to portray the transcendental reality of that centre of attraction, as well as other attempts at delineating spiritual scenes, I am sadly reminded how defective and futile must be the descriptions. The power of human language is utterly inadequate to place before the mind's eye scenes so sublimated as are some of those which I have essayed to depict. You and they who listen or read must simply take earthly language and explanation from those who, under great disadvantages, do their best to bring somewhat of light, defective though it be, upon subjects foreign to what is termed the physical stage of existence.

There are things which cross your path in the busy world which seem to rule your being, and many pause and say, "I hail the morn that ushers in another day." But what may come upon you as that morn advances you know not. Your spirit may be suddenly borne within the veil, leaving its physical casket to mingle with the elements of its mother-earth, from whence it was evolved, there to fructify and assist in the evolution of other forms of life. The rocks, the shells, the flowers and other protean forms of the vegetable kingdom, have been unfolded and brought to light by the deaths of others. Those silent cities of the dead in the ages that have passed have contributed in no small degree towards the

Digitized by Google

vivification of the cities of the living in the succeeding ages. The decomposed bodies of man and other animals recoup the earth, to a considerable extent, for what those bodies, when animated with life, had abstracted from it.

Every atom of this world, as well as the other myriad globes of the illimitable Universe, has been endowed with potency of motion by the Great Author of all. Heat and electricity are latent in all matter: this fact has only of late been admitted by your scientists; and those essentials to life—as well as that of light—are but modifications of the magnetic element, which is replete with vitality. The sacred shackles, then, cannot be broken; and you might say with truth that every particle of the globe upon which you live is abounding with life—with a vitality which nothing can extinguish.

I shall now conduct you by words as quickly as I possibly can to four different planets, as from that brilliant centre in the Summer Land the happy spirits connected therewith are brought into affinity with those glorious orbs.

I shall first speak of the planet which earth's people know as "Saturn," whose light varies—sometimes appearing bright and at others dull. It is a world far excelling this in superficial beauty; yet its inhabitants are deficient in some of the gifts and powers which are here paramount. There, however, life exists under somewhat different circumstances than it does on the earth; even the most careless thinker need not to be told that the vast orbit of that world would necessitate different conditions in every form of life.

When I first became acquainted with those spiritual powers which enabled the spirit to enter that which was dark within, I was exhilarated to a degree that words cannot express. I was like a wave heaving its force against the solid rock—dashing and foaming away into froth.

In its configuration Saturn appeared to me like the one upon which I at present stand, but far more advanced: that

Digitized by Google

is, its nucleus was of an origin infinitely more remote than earth's nucleus, and it had progressed accordingly; its people seemed to possess more knowledge of the higher secrets of Nature than do the inhabitants of this smaller and more youthful world.

I ascertained, upon an intimate study of the surroundings of Saturn, that the apex of its creation had been attained many, very many, thousands of years prior to the time that earth had become embellished by a sentient being; aye, indeed, many thousands of years before it had even become fitted for vegetable life.

I found the Saturnians to possess a knowledge of the method of securing the necessaries of life without having recourse to tilling the soil! For they were so intimate with the arcana of chemistry that they could, at pleasure or when requisite, abstract from the atmosphere surrounding their world all that they needed for the sustenance of life! Doubtless this statement will be received—as all truths have at first been greeted—by jeers and ridicule; but it matters not; for truth, however any statement regarding it may be received, however ignominiously it may be treated, will ever remain intact. Those who please have a perfect right not to accept these or any other statement made by me, but they cannot refute them, or point out a selfish motive for making them, or for misrepresenting facts, as they assume. Yes, as the atmospheres of all advanced worlds hold in solution the essentials requisite to sustain the vitality of the creatures upon those worlds, so that of Saturn, whose denizens have sufficiently progressed in a scientific point of view whereby they possess the knowledge of wresting from the air they inhale the comforts and necessaries of life. They have so far progressed that education, which with you is such a tedious and laborious acquisition, appears to be, I may say, in affinity with those people. They acquire it, as it were, spontaneously. It seems to be inherent in their nature.

Digitized by Google

I found that inventions, which have been of recent origin on your globe, were there known and utilised ages before earth possessed a reasoning creature.

I perceived that the existence of Saturn's people was more in accord with the dictates of Nature than is that of this world's people. Wars and rumours of wars, if ever they had obtained a place there, have become obsolete. Their conception of the Deity, as might naturally be expected from a people who are proficient in science, is more worthy of the mighty Ruler of the Universe than is the conception of a people just stepping upon the precincts of science.

To give you even a brief sketch of the most important subjects pertaining to Saturn and its inhabitants would occupy more time than will be allowable to me, and I will merely add that the latter are of a truly simple nature, having gradually passed through the refining channel of progress. Within their souls they covet not material riches, but they seek to conduct their minds to the jewels of Nature. Their figures are symmetrically shaped, and their countenances beam with love.

When I first stepped upon the distant shore of that glorious planet, in its morning light, all nature seemed to welcome and to speak to me with kindness—not kindness merely evidenced by the lips, which are the ministers to man's transparent * kindness, but with a manifestation worthy of a world which had so far advanced in the cycles of progress.

The existence of those beings in that favoured world seemed to me to be the personification of innocence. Oh! I can ne'er hope to express the glorious sweetness of their natures. They are in constant correspondence with the spirits of our fifth sphere.

---

* I know not whether to take this word as a *lapsus linguæ* or a deliberate utterance on the part of the spirit. If the latter, it appears to be a phillipic at insincerity. — ED.

Digitized by Google

I will now picture another planet—Jupiter. What a difference! One might almost imagine that to earth he had wandered, for the various degrading impulses—the bane of your world—were there bubbling like a volcano.

The natures of Jupiter's inhabitants are fiery and despotic. They delight in rapine, and are markedly characterised by voraciousness. Their intellectual faculties are on a par with their uncouth appearance. After a prolonged stay I was forced to the conclusion that their intellects and power of speech were blank indeed. They strongly reminded me of detached tribes of earth—of savages who rule by force and despotism, and perpetrate atrocities which disgrace human kind.

Repulsive and abhorrent as are those creatures at present, they are yet destined to be replaced by those who, in sweetness and gentleness of mind, will eventually equal the people of Saturn at the present time; for Progress is limited to no portion of the immensity of Creation: action and reaction (in obedience to its laws) everywhere pervades the vast Universe.

The scenery on the surface of Jupiter presents a marked and favourable contrast to the condition of mind appertaining to its people, as the scenery of that planet is glorious to behold. Yes— sad reminiscence! in my observations of the manners and customs of that yet barbaric people, I was painfully reminded of the least worthy characteristics of Earth's people. The throbs that obtain sway in their bosoms are of that kind which delight in might at the expense of right. Every separate tribe on that great globe is stirred by the lust of conquest over all the others. In brief, they are beings within whose souls the most diabolical passions seem to reign. Oh! 'tis a mournful contemplation; but we will haste to another scene—to another world. It is somewhat like emerging from darkness to light to contemplate the beings of this planet after contact with the low type of Jupiter. What a difference!

Digitized by Google

The beings of which I now speak are so far distinguished by light and beauty that sacred bridges span their royal sky. In intellect they far excel the denizens of earth. In love with harmony, they are ever impelled forward to progress: they consequently seek to build upon the rock of Truth: a discovery of error is immediately succeeded by a quest for a scientific foundation. This planet is as yet unknown to the astronomers of earth: its place has yet to be discovered by mortal eyes. In speaking of the other two worlds I have applied the names by which they are designated by yourselves; but of this last mentioned planet I have not spoken by name. In referring to them I have been compelled to be brief, and the reference is necessarily meagre and incomplete.

(Here the lecturer conducted his Medium around the circle, and apparently examined attentively each member thereof—the result of the examination being a request that three o the members should withdraw from the room while the following was being delivered. It appeared to be a considerate movement of the spirit—considerate in so far that he deemed the three sitters too nervous or timid to hear with complacency the appalling description which was given of spirits who are ever on the alert to deceive mankind. The description—which is very imperfectly rendered, as, indeed, are nearly all the lectures — was induced by the annoyance occasioned to one of the members of the circle by a false communication received from a denizen of the other world.)

The reason why I have disconnected the links of the chain (of the circle) is because of the now absent links being unable, probably, to bear the strain put upon them by what may follow.

Man is the architect of his own destiny—he chooses for himself. The change termed death relieves him not of the vices, the idiosyncracies, or the opinions of which he may be

Digitized by Google

the possessor. Those will cling to him as a second nature until his own firm resolves have eradicated all that is bad and false. Need you to be told then that, among the world of spirits (which has received thousands of generations from earth) there are beings who are animated by the same base and brutal passions which you find so rampant in the physical state? By the impartial laws of Nature the road to return is open to all classes.

Understanding so much it will be superfluous to warn you that, in your intercourse with spirits, you should use your keenest discrimination. Bring your reason and judgment to bear upon assertions or statements advanced by the invisible communicants. Accept them rather with hesitancy than confidence unless you are sure you can rely with certainty upon the spirit who communes with you. Believe not every spirit. Try the spirits out of the flesh as you would test those in it, and "prove all things," as was advised of old. If no other benefit were to be derived from the commerce with spirits than the exercise of reason it will have served a beneficial purpose, for that inestimable endowment has been too long neglected by the masses of mankind.

The attempts upon mankind of evilly-disposed spirits are wofully wicked, for there is nothing bad in the race which they do not stir up and encourage by all the machinations at their command. The direful attempts of those darker spirits have too often resulted in sad distress to their victims. Believe not that such attempts have been of recent origin. No, for they date back from a very remote period—contemporaneously, it is reasonable to suppose, with the advent of spirits from earth to the spheres connected therewith.

There are millions, aye, hundreds of millions, who have passed from your earth with naught but hatred and revenge burning within them, and to gratify those dreadful feelings they are ever on the look out for victims. Within those

Digitized by Google

mystic worlds, whose vast dominions you have no conception of or power to know, there are beings who at this present moment are hurling their curses at you—curses that, were you to hear them, would curdle the blood in your veins. If it were in their power to do so they would darken your very souls, and drag you into the same dismal and indescribable state as themselves. There are times when they obtrude into the sacred circle. At such times conditions, of a subtle nature, favour their intrusion, and they will visit when they can in spite of all kind thoughts and prayers. This is sincere matter for regret, but it will remain thus until mankind have developed to a higher harmonial state, to such a state as will preclude any sinister influence from interfering with the serenity of meetings of a spiritual or any other nature. The regenerating influence of the brighter and happier spirits has ever been exerted to lessen the incalculable numbers of the lower sphere, and although their exertions have not been vain yet a prolonged period must elapse ere that sphere becomes destitute of inhabitants, for, unfortunately, it is daily and hourly being recruited by large numbers from earth. Time and progress, both in the first as well as in the second sphere, however, will eventually effect the desired end, but, for the attainment of a consummation so devoutly to be desired, the earth must become a land of truth, of love, and of harmony. Therefore it is the duty of all to endeavour to bring about this radical change, not only on the part of those in the spiritual spheres, but also of those on earth.

Looking upon them in the mighty aggregate the spirits of that nether world combined may well represent the devil of orthodoxy with certain modifications, less the appendages and appurtenances with which that old mythical being has been invested ; but they are, in reality, "the devil," taking them in the concrete—the devil in all its hugeness, and of such a nature as to be little dreamt or thought of by man.

Digitized by Google

In that book which short-sighted, credulous, and superstitious man has regarded with such unquestionable reverence, the perspicacious reader will perceive how those people termed prophets were occasionally tormented by spirits of a lower grade. The accounts extant of the proceedings of those olden times are now necessarily attenuated; but what have been handed down (making every allowance for distortion) are sufficient to convince every rational mind that the so-called prophets, who were thought to be enshrouded by a light whose crowning brightness was a supposed divine protection, were occasionally the victims of a dreadful influence proceeding from "the devils." According to the bible, even the greatest Reformer, the noblest Martyr, the most earnest Truth-seeker and advocate of his day was not impervious to their assaults: this noble man was not always successful in repelling their advances: his mandate could not ensure freedom from their company. They will now, as formerly, at times intrude, despite the endeavours of the brighter spirits and the attempts of man to prevent them; but mankind can supplement the exertions of the better spirits in their endeavours to reclaim those who are on a lower plane, by adopting a consistent and kind course of treatment towards our less fortunate brothers and sisters when they do invade the sanctity of their circles and homes. In those beings, erring and dark as they now are, the spirit of light is not quenched: love—all powerful love —the love of more elevated spirits, will aid in the development of that now latent spark within them which will gradually beam forth a light which will reveal to them a purer atmosphere and a brighter sky.

In your dealings with spirits, do unto them as you would desire that they should do unto you: this rule, consistently adhered to, will prove a beneficial auxiliary to those who are ever exerting themselves for the reformation and elevation of all below them.

Digitized by Google

Enter not into communion with spirits in a trifling or irreverent mood. Nature, in her blossoms, hides the thorns, which, if carelessly tampered with, will wound the flesh.

There being so few sitters has reduced my power: I cannot control longer this evening. Good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XLII.

DELIVERED 7TH SEPTEMBER, 1875.

GOOD EVENING. Oh! glorious Author of light and love, whose beauty seems to extend and expand as the spiritual organisation comes more in contact with Thy wondrous works: whose brilliancy casts forth a magnificence through thousands of worlds, it is impossible that we can sufficiently manifest the gratitude which should animate us when we think of those worlds of progress and of joy that are the eternal destiny of the spirit: when we think that the occupations of all who inhabit those worlds are not restricted, but are multitudinous and diversified, and that we are transferred thither to bloom into goodness and purity, and with each advance we approach nigher and nigher towards Thee in love, truth, and light.

The soul of man is the acme of all Thy works, for it pre-eminently reflects Thy light; and we behold in this Thy loving visage—Thy purity of mind—the soul-engrossing Power which animates the Universe. In lakes, rivers, and streams—in hills, mountains, and dales—man can perceive sufficient to convince him that Thou, Oh! Father, art no wayward or fickle Deity, but a God of consistency, impartiality, and love, as is shadowed forth in every vestige of this rolling globe on which he dwells.

At every step, Oh! Gracious Being, that we take on the ladder of progression which Thou hast placed for our ascent towards Thee, there is disclosed to our enraptured gaze more of the hitherto hidden marvels of Thy vast realms, inciting us to continue the advance, and thereby become worthy of immortality and of Thee our God and Father. Words are too

Digitized by Google

feeble to express the sentiments which animate us; therefore we pray Thee to accept our inward breathings or thoughts for our thanks and gratitude now and for evermore.

In my last discourse I alluded briefly to three planets. I was compelled to bring that lecture to a rather sudden termination. But that has not been the only one which has been so treated, for, unfortunately, I have been forced to hasten my utterances to such a degree that at times (as I have subsequently perceived) important omissions and faults have been the result. Those of you who, by intuition, have gained a slight inkling of the difficulty attending our communion with you through such imperfect media can (to a slight extent at least—for you cannot realise our position until you become as we are) without doubt, view with sympathy these our crude efforts to enlighten you. But from those outside the pale of a belief in spiritualism we cannot expect such sympathy. On the contrary, we must look forward to much adverse criticism from the more fastidious and incredulous readers of these discourses. Had they, however, been given in the most masterly style, they would not be exempt from captious remarks, for the subject matter therein yet lies under the ban of what is, by courtesy, termed "orthodoxy," and is, in consequence, tabooed by those who yet profess to view with respect that venerable institution.*

There is a marked difference in many of the worlds which man designates as "planets." I do not mean difference in

---

* It is only due to the Lecturer to add that, owing to the great rapidity with which, at times, he spoke through the Medium, it was utterly impossible for a shorthand writer to report his utterances in full, and thus to do justice to him. Allowance should therefore be made also on this score for the many imperfections noticeable in these lectures.—Ed.

Digitized by Google

form or shape, for their diurnal and annual motions necessitate that rotund form termed spheroidal; but difference in stages of progress—there being as many as there are in the advance of a human being from infancy to maturity.

Those worlds are in various stages of progress. A few bear a resemblance to this one of earth, but there are those which yet remain in the infantile stage—a stage which you would describe as chaotic.

One of the four planets mentioned in my last lecture is yet in this chaotic phase.

With some companions I crossed to that fairy dot in your solar system. What a sight for the eye of man to gaze upon! (What a grandly-awful pyrotechnic display! would, probably, be the exclamation of some of your philosophers were they to view such a sight). Revolving with inconceivable rapidity it emitted a lurid light, and cast out a heat that precluded advance into its immediate proximity.

To a spectator limited to physical vision the atmosphere around that semi-molten mass would appear thick with darkness, for, notwithstanding its powerful state of ignition, there was an influence to counteract the illumination. Dense streams of sulphurous and other vapours were incessantly ejected by that embryo world while swiftly moving onward along the orbit assigned it. Those fumes were so dense that the spectator would be unable to perceive, except indistinctly, the violent commotion existing upon the surface of that infant world. Distance, however—as you have, doubtless, experienced in many things pertaining to your existence—enhances the view; for the spectator (supposing him to be still restricted to physical sight) would perceive that an increased space between himself and the convulsed orb nullifies to a great extent that which, on a closer inspection, intercepted his view. He now sees more clearly—the atmosphere that appeared so impervious looks now less dense, and the war

Digitized by Google

waged by the conflict of eruptions in the process of elimination is seen to greater advantage.

That burning mass, it was pointed out to me, is destined to become in time a fit abode for vegetable and animal life. Before, however, it attains to such an epoch centuries—yea, centuries upon centuries of your time—will have passed. Yes, many thousands of years must elapse ere it is adapted to become an herbaceous world, and thousands more will have elapsed ere the apex of the animal kingdom has been evolved from that now seething mass.

No doubt that, by those who still cling to the six-days'-creation-fable, this statement or assertion will be disputed, if it is not held up to ridicule by them; but I ask them to look to some parts of the little world they are yet tied to: a world large, indeed, to them, but a mere point in the immensity of the Universe. All barrenness and darkness—no civilisation—no perceptible onward march or stride of progress is there. Then like a bird seeking other climes, look on another part and see the difference. See the luxuriant array! You cannot place your foot down but you press some tender plant or beautiful flower, and all Nature seems to warble forth: "This is fitted for the footsteps of man."

Forward, as flows the perennial stream of time, doth the work of Creation ever tend. No stagnation—no quiescence is to be perceived among the myriads of globes which stud God's mighty Domains. They are ever advancing—ever improving.

Hundreds, yea, thousands, of fiery-looking dots—somewhat similar to the one which I have cursorily mentioned—are careering on the paths marked out for them, and gradually but surely collecting and concentrating the forces which will ultimately form bright and beautiful worlds fitted for the existence of soul-endowed beings.

I visited another of those orbicular bodies much further advanced upon the path of progress. Upon its surface at one

Digitized by Google

side, which we will term the east, I observed that vegetable life was beginning to spring forth. I could perceive, by my soul-reading powers, a vitality (dissimilar to what is here to be seen) proceeding from the minute life to the greater, presenting indications of eventually breaking the crust or surface which yet impedes its advent. On another side of this orb I noticed coral reefs, whose stupendous beauty seemed as if it had been designed and formed by the hand of the Eternal Architect direct, instead of through the agency of animalcules. The less advanced side of that incipient world appeared to be bound by a dark and sullen cloud which time and progress are certain to displace prior to its becoming fitted, under Divine superintendence, to receive the influence of such life as animates the surface of this globe of Earth. The attainment of such a step in the path of progress constitutes it a brighter gem in the diadem of Him, the Mighty Ruler of the boundless Universe.

Such is a slight glimpse at a few of those bodies which are, by most human beings, thoughtlessly viewed and spoken of merely as "stars," whose light is ever sparkling, ever beaming upon you. The sun—he seems to rise in his splendour as a fiery orb. The moon—she seems to rise as the modest lamp of night. These, with all the unnumbered worlds of the immeasurable Universe, are influenced and united, in their different lines and actions, by the grand unity of mind, spirit, and soul. Not one can be pointed to as worthless or useless, but each performs its allotted part in the economy of that Great Architect who has designed and laid out the illimitable Universe, every part of which is instinct with the principle of progression. I shall now return to the subject which engrossed our attention before I introduced that of the planets.

The soul has become gradually enlarged. The gushing streams of Immortality (about which there should assuredly be

Digitized by Google

no doubt) pour forth, and as the star maintains its onward march, so roams the spirit through celestial scenes of grandeur, whose paths are made more manifest, and far more thrilling, bright and pure, as it proceeds in its ascent. All things as you cultivate them become in harmony and unity with you. If the spirit does not lift its soul to higher sources stagnation ensues. It lacks for a time the vital, moving power to press it onward. What is this vital, moving power?—this great motor which impels all things forward. It is Love—the most omnipotent of all motives, uplifting in its influence, and, like a diamond which sheds forth its starry light, it points to those who will willingly help you to an elevated home in the world beyond.

Our development qualifying us, we left the sphere we were in. When I say "we" you must distinctly understand that I was accompanied by thousands more who, likewise, had severed the ties which bound them, thus admitting their ascension to higher lands. There we awoke. No pains, no longings, no solitary forebodings, no heart-griefs, no thirsting to return, no sighing on account of love, but, like the genial rays of the sun permeating the atmosphere of your earth, everything was in harmony with us, and we with all around, for our souls had reached such a state as is best described by—a holy serenity.

I will give you a brief summary of what I then beheld. Beneath the arch of that exalted sphere I saw six worlds, each of which interblended with the other. What sights! What glorious visions! What spangled orbs! What immense mansions! What sparkling streams! What placid lakes! What beautiful mountains! What delightful music from the birds!—who had no fear of danger as they flew about decked in their golden plumage. Beyond, and what did I see? Planets of various dimensions and states of progress, revolving in majestic grandeur, each emitting and reflecting its quota of

Digitized by Google

warmth and light, derived from a sun which beamed forth—not rays of a colour that meets your vision here, but beams of a vermilion light which seemed to spangle over all things and imparted to all a halcyon rest. I shall now raise the curtain on the other side and reveal the scene beyond. What saw I there? Not one only, but many moons, which appeared to be suspended like diamonds in the arched vault of the azure firmament, all casting forth a beautiful purple colour o'er scenes of the richest grandeur.

Oh! Father, upon this world of earth—upon those hills and mountains—in those valleys and dales, Thy praises have been sung by many who have preceded these to whom we are now ministering: by those who have gone before to develop into that higher state which is illustrated in Thy more glorious spheres.

In this chequered physical life mankind have fortunately recourse to the rock of Hope to assure them of safety. Hope! thou star of Life, which disperses the clouds of dreariness that sometimes hover o'er earth's existence, without thee the blood would chill—all earthly pleasures would be scattered to the winds. Flowers would no longer bloom in their gorgeous beauty; and in their drooping tenderness would add to the desolation of the scene. But Hope steps in and says: "Be not dreary—heed not this life's dull care: a bright life beyond awaits thee—a life environed not as 'tis here."

Hope—sweet Hope! Take it away, and what a desert this world would become! Then, onward! Cheerily onward through the chequered paths of this mundane life, fearlessly, confidently onward, and stem the breakers of strife; for there are Hope and Life for evermore. Good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XLIII.

DELIVERED 10TH SEPTEMBER, 1875.

GOOD EVENING. It is with rapturous joy that we contemplate the progress we are making in the acquisition of a knowledge of those laws and powers by which we are enabled to be brought in closer contact with those who are not as yet freed from the rudimentary condition.

Yet we find—and they, too, find—that the bridge is not wide enough—that its path is not plain enough. But still, Oh! Father, we are consoled and cheered by the reflection (and we are anxious that they, too, should likewise be so consoled and cheered), that, as time wears on, we, with Thy Divine favour and by increased knowledge, will be enabled to widen the bridge and make the path plainer.

A clearer insight into the mysteries of Thy laws beyond the ken of man has opened out to us a knowledge, the possession of which imparts a confidence that at no distant day we shall be rewarded by being enabled to reveal to mankind in a more frequent and demonstrative manner our spiritual forms and organisations.

Cheered by Thy balmy influences, Oh! Father—encouraged by the warmth of Thy beauty clinging to our hearts in clustering ringlets of light, we cannot otherwise than prosecute researches into the arcana of Thy vast dominions. Safely and profitably shall we be thus engaged: safely, for it is with Thy sanction: profitably, for perseverance in such a course will make us more worthy of Thee.

As the ivy clings to the porch from whose foundations it derives its succour, so do we, Gracious Being, look to Thee for

Digitized by Google

support and succour in our endeavours to fortify morality upon this nether world, and to teach its people to foster and encourage the growth of their spiritual faculties.

I shall now advert to that part of the sixth sphere which may be termed the first plane. But I wish you to understand that the allusions will be but cursory; for my powers of controlling this Medium are becoming gradually and surely less: they have been and are upon the wane; and the time is approaching when, in accord with the inexorable but beneficent decrees of Nature, I shall be unable to greet you *direct*, as now, through this or any other similar channel.

I will lead you, then, as briefly as I can through what I have to describe. I shall try and draw aside the curtain, and afford you as far as in my power an insight into that sphere below the seventh, or Sphere of Glory. In that celestial sphere all are as one happy family, united by the laws of purity, affinity, and love. What I beheld in the first plane of the sixth sphere I shall now picture to your minds as concisely as possible.

I was conducted to, what appeared to me, a vast and mighty hall, which seemed to have been built on foundations of diamonds, and to be supported by lustrous pillars, which received their brilliancy from the celestial light that streamed upon them. Its windows were unlike any I had heretofore seen, not only in their dimensions, but in a peculiarity that inhered (or appeared to inhere to them) of emitting brilliant flashes of light from which were produced sounds of concord and harmony. These windows were of a transparency so clear and crystalline as to be far beyond what your imagination can conceive.

It is impossible to realise my feelings as I beheld that glorious scene illuminated by twice ten thousand lights,

Digitized by Google

whose rays of diverse colours intermingled in one blaze of magnificence, enhanced, as it was, by the concord of sweet sounds which were the result of the emission of those beautiful tints.

The entrances (and they were numerous) to this hall were decked and beautified by an artistic and grand display. Each step leading up the ascent to it was of the brightest marble, of various hues, each hue appearing to rival the other in beauty and brightness, yet all seemed to blend together in inseparable chains of light, the whole presenting an appearance of exceeding grandeur and loveliness.

With serene and hallowed feelings I trod those sacred steps—for such you would term them—and I gazed beyond with fondest rapture. With my ascent to that elevated plane of spirit existence had vanished all that was incompatible and unworthy of entrance there, and those things and forms with which I had been connected were now no longer to be habitually associated with me. I was attracted by some heavenly spell that cast its silvery wand around me.

I was led to infer (and I now can thoroughly believe) that it was from that elevated region of spiritual existence where the ancient prophets who were most worthy of reliance received their inspirations. It was there—having thrown away for the time being the outside form of Nature—where they imbibed of the pearly fountains, where they trod upon the mossy floor with all its beauty and serenity No idolatrous allurements were there to be seen, but all seemed ruled by the grand and impressive voice of Nature—a voice that spoke in tones unmistakable and profound, proclaiming that omnipotent wisdom reigned beneficent and supreme over all.

Not built by hands was that most glorious and silvery mansion. Oh! no; but by a gracious influence which is rather felt than seen—an influence of love—of perfect love—that love which, as has been said, extirpates all fear.

Digitized by Google

Upon those steps I stood, and besides myself were countless numbers that have, by mankind, been reckoned with the dead. Let us ascend. . . . Now I gaze upon a sight I ne'er shall forget. Ah! would that I could transport you by some magic influence to that bright land, there to behold the sacred relics of a city which once was worshipped by those prophets who were cherished dearly by their spiritually-minded brethren.

In that city, designed by almost omnipotent ability, the spirit meets with forms with which he seems to be familiar; yet his intuitive perceptions tell him that they are seen by him for the first time—so transcendently advanced are the spirits who, by virtue of their goodness and aspirations, have become qualified to be denizens in that glorious sphere.

Arise! and let me lead you forward to trace the path up higher and higher. A hundred steps seem to be decked in wreaths of flowers, whose beauty crowns with brilliancy the enchanting scene around. We come to the entrance. Earth! oh! earth, thy breadth—thy circumference, is supposed by thy inhabitants to be great. Thy dimensions are deemed by the generality of mankind to be of surpassing magnitude; but the portals of that spiritual sphere exceed, by far, the extent of thy bounds.

Open, ye gates! and let us peer within. Opened are these gates, which are formed not of brass or any other metal, but of the rarest jewels welded together by more than human art. Beyond, behold those perfect orbs! Five glorious worlds revolve in dazzling splendour, rotating in most perfect order. No jar, no strain, but every movement faultless, in accordance with the unerring and infallible laws which govern and prompt it. Let us further penetrate. . . . What matchless scenery! Countless thousands appear to have entered within those portals all animated by love and kindness, purity of thought and action, generous and fully awakened impulses,

Digitized by Google

and sublime aspirations that have now found a congenial arena of action.

The spirit forms within that gateway were different to those with whom I had previously associated. They were of a more resplendent brightness than the spirits of the previous sphere. Everything there presented a hue or colour different from all I had yet witnessed. The materials composing the dresses of the innumerable spirits were of a quality excelling, in a supereminent degree, those used by spirits on a less elevated plane.

I am aware of some of the foolish remarks that have been passed upon the subject of the spirit garb, by those who deem dress to be superfluous in the ethereal existence; and by those who cannot believe it to be possible that material of such a description should there be manufactured. Short sighted mortals! Know ye the limits of the universal laws? Can ye not conceive of ultra mundane laws? Who upon this world knows of the possibility of Nature's laws? As there have existed from all time laws regulating the intercourse between this physical and those spiritual spheres, so are there laws which regulate the manufacture, to an unlimited extent, of fabrics for utilisation by spirits. Yes, fabrics both textile and edificial are manufactured and constructed in that world which is invisible to you; and in a manner so expeditious as would be accounted incredible by all who have not witnessed the ease and rapidity with which spirits can, as it were, weave at materialising circles the white muslin-like garments with which they enshroud themselves.

Ponder well upon this statement, ye so-called learned of earth, and no longer deceive yourselves by supposing that ye have solved a tithe of the enigmas surrounding your own existence, much less those pertaining to that existence of which ye are in such complete and reprehensible ignorance, for in the sphere of which I am at present speaking there are

Digitized by Google

fabricated not only textures of the finest and most elaborate description, but also some of the most noble works, some of the most majestic constructions imaginable.

The spirit on his advent to the sixth sphere is introduced to different customs, different manners, different attire, to those which he had previously been accustomed—all differing in a more sublime and perfect degree to everything in the spheres he has passed through; but such an introduction does not come upon him by any means with startling effect, for the gradual change which time and his own efforts, together with his experiences and anticipations, have wrought an effect that has prepared him, to a large extent, for the great change. Once he has entered that sphere he becomes transfixed by a pure and serene joy: he begins to more thoroughly realize the nature of his soul, and he further perceives that there is a continual blending and interlacing between that sphere of which he is an inhabitant and the one beyond, which, by his own efforts, he has yet to attain In this, as well as in other respects, those two exalted spheres resemble not those beneath them, because the spirit has so far progressed that Nature has interposed no barriers to prevent the intermingling, one with the other, of the denizens of these two spheres, so transcendently elevated are they beyond the moral plane of the spheres beneath them.

All Nature and all spiritual life have tended to beautify that sphere which, for the sake of distinction, we have designated the sixth, and the advanced state of the spirit, who is qualified to enter therein as an inhabitant, has rid himself of all ancient, priestly misrepresentations, whose depth and subtlety none know so well as those who view from an elevated spiritual standpoint their effects on mankind, not only in the past but also in the present day.

It is at this very juncture—at this crisis in the spiritual life—that our power to manifest ourselves to mankind begins

Digitized by Google

to wane; for the spirit then has commenced to assume so etherealized, so sublimated a form, that we are almost unable to return to earth. Indeed, in a less progressive stage of spirit-life—when the spirit is of a grosser nature—the task of communicating with you, even in the unsatisfactory manner that is as yet prevalent, is much greater than is imagined by those who are the recipients of our communications. It is impossible that you, who yet stand on the border of that bourne from which travellers do return, can be cognisant of the difficulties attending our endeavours to enlighten you. But those difficulties are destined to become much modified when the laws controlling the intercourse of spirits with mankind are better known by the latter, as well as by the less advanced of the former, for there are those in spirit-life who are, as yet, as ignorant as yourselves of the more subtle tendencies of those laws. When the Media of communication are better instructed and developed, then, and not till then, will the utterances of spirits be enhanced. If you are desirous of eliciting impassioned eloquence or correct diction from those in the higher spheres, the Medium through whom it has to be uttered must be prepared for it by education and development. If it has not already been proved, it yet can to an irrefutable degree, that inspiration is not obsolete—that it has not been limited to the prophets or seers of one age and withheld from those of succeeding ages, for it is attainable by your contemporaries if reverently and diligently sought for. But you must not expect inspiration of an extravagant or exclusive character—of a character whose claims are to be on a par with those held by Bibliolatrists for the records contained in that volume, which has too long been the cynosure of priests and their blind followers, for inspiration by them has been foolishly viewed as infallible. Inspiration, or the breathing into the human mind of ideas from a spiritual source, must not be invariably received as pure and undefiled, as unerring and

Digitized by Google

infallible. It has imparted, and will continue to impart invaluable precepts and knowledge, but the messages should not be received unquestioned by reason, as if they emanated direct from the Great Source of all and were of divine authority, as has been falsely attributed to those received of old.

The scepticism attached to the mental phenomenon known as inspiration will be dissipated when mankind awake to the fact that, in God's economy, spirits of the departed from earth are permitted to return and commune with those who are yet to become as themselves. Believe not that inspiration has ever been an influx direct from that supreme Source termed God, but rather believe that a better insight into the secrets of mental science will reveal the cause of all the psychical phenomena—that the subjects of inspiration are animated by spirits other than their own, generally of an exalted character, but sometimes otherwise.

I would here say, allow your faculties and conceptions a higher range, and try to imagine yourselves in a world free from the slightest discordance or inconsistency—for such is the world immediately above the sphere designated as the fifth or the first of the Summer Land. Amidst its scenes I shall now mentally lead you for a few moments.

Unlike pioneers of earth on their advent into a virgin territory no labour for constructing homes, cultivating fields, or desperate exertion for existence, is there required. The laws pervading and governing that sphere are so mysteriously woven together that even the brightest and clearest network of Nature could not convey to you the meaning I wish to express. We see not there. as we saw in the lower spheres, spires of churches or chapels as monuments of folly and worse—we there see no denomination keeping itself carefully apart from others. No; for through enlightenment the ears of all there are happily closed against insidious teachings, and

Digitized by Google

they listen instead to the teachings of Nature, which they interpret by that intrinsic light, the Deific spark, which beams within every living soul.

He or she who enters there wanders through that and the other five worlds I have referred to without the slightest doubt or care, no more than is possessed by an infant nestling on its mother's breast, for the mental powers of each spirit are so widely expanded and opened, the soul is so replete with love one for another, and Nature so surrounds the whole with her magnificence, that every creature there feels most acutely that he or she contains the kingdom of God within—that divine spirit of faith which inspires a serene confidence in the present as well as in the mighty future. The countless spirits there assembled now feel assured that they are for ever released from all turmoils and troubles—that blessings o'er them shower—and that they are surrounded by eternal rest and peace. There, where Nature is studded with the richest of jewels, are to be found some of the brightest intellects from earth and other physical worlds, whose mode of expression for communion differs in a marked manner from that which obtains upon your world.

Any spirit there who chooses takes an active part in the deliberations of the assemblies which are frequently held for furthering the progress of those who are less enlightened and advanced than are the inhabitants of that exalted abode, and as each word in these deliberations proceeds from the speakers it is transmitted by a law of Nature (of which mankind is yet in profound ignorance) to that central assemblage in the sphere below, which I mentioned, whence in expanding streams it flows through the whole of the spheres for all who are capable of receiving the benefit thereof.

Often as we look upon the earth—often as we move from earth to our spiritual homes, midst the bowers and groves and fairy-like scenes, we are ever reminded of that divine Power

Digitized by Google

unseen, by and through whose beneficent laws we are enabled to return and minister (feebly as yet) to the souls that are still encased by earthly garments. We are also incessantly reminded by the uninterrupted flow of souls (freed from that mortality) into the spiritual existence, that earth-life is but a few short moments—even at the best it is as but a day, and the summons comes at length to enter another world where the sovereignty of enlightened conscience is seen to be the avant-guard of the spirit to the more elevated and blest abodes which far transcend man's most sanguine anticipations and aspirations.

Oh! our Father—Light of lights—Life of lives—Soul of souls—Ruler of eternal worlds, smile upon us, we pray Thee, in our endeavours to dispel the darkness of ignorance, bigotry and superstition, which still hangs like a pall o'er so much of this earth-globe. Enable us, oh! thou supreme and gracious Being, to teach mankind that Thy gentle and loving spirit exists not in dogmatism, nor in contentious creeds, but that it is to be found in that monitor (often, alas! unheeded—often obscured) which exists in the soul of every one. Encourage and permit us, oh! Father, to teach our brothers and sisters who are yet confined to earth that Thy wisdom is based on love—that Love which should dispel all fear, and that by love alone—true and perfect love—can Thy laws be fulfilled. Good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XLIV.

DELIVERED 13TH SEPTEMBER, 1875.

GOOD EVENING. You may deem it unkind that I do not branch off from the series of discourses which I am trying my best to accomplish, but to make another change would break through the tender fibre which unites the spirit with matter.* I have tried to explain to you (I might almost say in vain) that however desirous a spirit may be to entwine its soul-power around matter it is liable at any moment, from causes which to explain here would necessitate too great a digression, to relinquish its control. That power which I have been accustomed to use with vigour and quickness is now rapidly on the decline, like the beams from the sun as that glowing orb disappears in your western horizon. The higher we proceed the more difficult doth become our task to interblend with things appertaining to this earth-globe, and even with spirits of the lower spheres. You have, undoubtedly, perceived the difficulty at times manifested while I have been endeavouring to convey a description of the various scenes in the spheres through which I passed. The difficulty has not been from want of love, or confidence, or desire, but for lack of those favourable, subtle conditions being present which enable those who have traversed through the various spheres to unite and entwine themselves with that form of matter termed flesh.

---

*This remark was called forth, I inferred, by a desire expressed by one of the sitters prior to the Medium being entranced to gain information from the Leading Control on another subject.—ED.

Digitized by Google

As I have before observed the higher the ascent of the spirit the greater the difficulty of that spirit in communing personally with earth's people, and the exaltation eventually becomes so extreme as to preclude the possibility of the spirit assuming that or any similar position which I now in a degree command—that of using, directly, an earthly Medium for communion with the people of this globe.

Commensurate with the lofty aspirations of the soul is the exaltation of the spirit in the sixth sphere, until it is wafted within those hidden realms of the Celestial Sphere to which the eye of an earthly clairvoyant hath never penetrated.

(After a short pause the lecturer again resumed his discourse as follows) :—

"Fair" Greece, "Glorious" Jerusalem! What have ye now to indicate that ye were fair and glorious? Thy valorous and noteworthy deeds—thy edifices of grandeur, have failed to be perpetuated, and the vital energy which once made ye famous has been transplanted to other soils. The sparkling waters that dash upon thy shores seem to say: "I have spoken, and I can speak no more." The forms that erstwhile did grace thee and help to make thee renowned are now mingled with the dust; and their remote posterity, in admiration of the spirits which animated those forms, have searched catacombs and sepulchral caves in quest of hieroglyphics and epitaphs to glean a better knowledge than history hath revealed of thee: little thinking that more vital and immortal relics than those of which the epitaphs do tell are near them to recount—if properly questioned—a truer tale than is possible for sepulchral epitaphs and sculptured hieroglyphics—relics attesting the continued existence of thy famous sons and patriots whom mankind in subsequent ages have been wont to speak of as extinct celebrities. Yes, the change which men are wont to term "Death" has introduced them to an existence surpassing that which had been formed by their most sublime conceptions,

Digitized by Google

The change has proved to them more glorious than the brightest dawn of an earthly morning. The sleep known as death was to them as a brief transition from troubled dreams to delightful realities—immeasurably more delightful than their most sanguine hopes could have conceived.

By the good alone—by those who had passed a life well spent, according to the lights within them—were those delightful phases immediately realized; for the life which succeeds the transition is the supplement of that which precedes it. No instantaneous metamorphosis of character ensues upon emergence from that transitional state; the virtues and vices of the individual pass with him; and he gravitates to that grade in the spheres for which, by the character he has formed, he has an affinity—to that position which, by his life on the earth-sphere, he has fitted himself to occupy and enjoy in the spiritual spheres. I shall now proceed to describe what may be termed the interior—beyond the regions of which I gave you a passing description in a previous lecture.

Passing from those scenes and that magnificent building I perceived that I had only as yet trod upon the mere rim or outskirts of Nature. As I penetrated within so did my spirit become more purified, and the attractions of Nature appeared to assume even a higher and more lofty state.

Earth's society presents a mournful antithesis to what was so pleasingly manifest in that halcyon abode of the spirit; for no division into various groups is there to be seen: the dividing chains have been severed: they have melted before the genial influence of purity, love, and affinity. Those gentle influences have there become eternally blended, and form a perennial fountain that nought can pollute or destroy. Let us glance briefly at the phase of life as there exhibited. But before doing so, I would fain deprecate any vile abuse at the benignity and simplicity of Nature in deigning to be so orderly

Digitized by Google

in her methods—in condescending to perpetuate (as far as mankind are concerned) the same variety of the more chaste and virtuous enjoyments that obtain a place in the first sphere of man's existence. To those upon earth who reject the idea of analogous avocations and pleasures (but of a more elevated character) in the higher spheres, I would say that Nature's mode of working is not only multiform but uniform. The Creator's works which your limited vision can embrace bear the impress of uniformity; and you may rest assured that the same uniformity pervades the entire economy of the Universe. That uniformity is aptly represented by the individual life of man—his physical growth from a helpless infant to an adult age, presenting an analogy to a limited extent. But a more comprehensive illustration (if your conceptions are sufficiently expansive to embrace it) can be advanced in the succession of life—animal life—upon this globe: a progression, through untold ages, of that vitality from the lowest form to the summit which man represents.

But to revert to the subject in hand. With numberless companions I entered a city of that advanced sphere, and it needed but a cursory glance to reveal to me the fact that innocent enjoyment and festivities were not viewed as incompatible or inconsistent with that elevated state of spiritual life. These festivities, however, do not interfere with the chosen avocations of each spirit. They are merely supplemental, and by their invigorating effect are aids to spiritual advancement. The community appeared as one vast and happy, festive gathering, and the demeanour of each member was similar to that of an amiable, cultured child. No irksome trammels were there in existence to prevent freedom of social intercourse and companionship, for from such unnatural thralls those advanced beings are for ever emancipated.

Upon my first introduction to that pure and happy throng I paused, I hesitated; for even then diffidence or distrust of

Digitized by Google

my purity, qualifying me to associate with those unsullied spirits, loomed up before me, but the confidence and sweetness of disposition with which I was met reassured me, and I soon found myself at ease and happy among a people from whom all earthly traces had vanished. There old age is no longer to be seen—wrinkled faces or withered frames are things of the past. The infant has grown older, but the old have grown young—a development in the most sublime sense of the term has taken place—a development corresponding and in harmony with the scenery around!

Strange, doubtless, some will deem it, that friendly intercourse and companionship should be in existence in exalted spiritual life. But, if strange, 'tis nevertheless true. Note well, however, that such intercourse and companionship among spirits of so high a sphere as that of which I am now speaking transcends, by an immeasurable degree, in purity, harmony and affinity, the highest state of social intercourse prevalent upon earth. It is a social system of the most elevated character, pure and chaste, a system which, in lieu of assuming a dictatorial position towards Nature, gratefully accepts and venerates the conditions prescribed by her.

The costumes of the various spirits were something delightful and marvellous to behold. No despotic fashions are there to restrict the taste and impose conditions uncongenial; but all are free to gratify their chaste and unsophisticated desires.

Their avocations are various, and all are busy workers: not workers in the earth-sense of the term; for work there is synonymous with pleasure and delight, and no weariness supervenes upon their active existence. They are ever co-operating with spirits in the other spheres of advancement in endeavours to exercise a spiritual influence upon the race, both on earth and in the intervening spheres, to dispel the darkness which hangs around, and introduce the cheering and revivifying rays of the Light of Truth.

Digitized by Google

There is existing among them a familiarity so chaste, yet so free from embarrassment, and so actuated by the purest and warmest love that makes it inexpressibly attractive and fascinating to every one, as it was to myself when first enjoying an introspection of that sphere of Love, Harmony, Affinity, and Truth.

"Come with me and I will show you the scenes," said one to me; and as he spoke thousands welcomed me at once, and among them many of those who were akin to me by ties of family.

To a glorious mansion in a city of vast proportions, and beautifully arranged, I was conducted. It seemed to have been blended together by all the harmonious influences of Nature. Strange! methought, 'tis strange, indeed, that the influences of Nature should be so felt. Were you enabled to see that mansion you would be apt to conclude that all the artists of note and celebrity of the past had combined to exercise their skill upon it—so elaborate and chaste the design portrayed. But I discovered that the chief Designer, Architect, and Artist was Nature—simple but potent and unerring Nature.

"Here is the place where you will abide with your family," said my guide; "and those around you will help to reveal to you the mysterious influences of that glorious and beneficent Power, whose ever-sparkling attractions are eternally held out to us and are ever drawing us nearer to Him who is the soul of love. The reception I met with from the various members of that enchanting household was of such a character as to preclude the possibility of my being enabled to convey to you, through this source, any idea of its joyful and grateful impressiveness. It will be sufficient for me to say that it was beyond all I could have desired. My kind and loving friends gave me to understand that they had long looked forward to this meeting, and that the progress of each member of the

Digitized by Google

family—no matter how remote the relationship may have been—was here watched with intense interest.

Language cannot express the transcendent beauty and sublimity reigning o'er that lustrous world, throughout whose realms love and harmony are everlastingly transfused, and where enchanting and soul-stirring music doth crown the glorious scene.

Where, also, in every soul doth rule supreme and beneficent the vicegerent of the Omnipresent, animating and prompting each to exercise their best endeavours towards the ethical and spiritual development of the race—of those beneath them in spiritual existence; and oh, how simply, how faithfully, how earnestly doth each respond to the sacred dictates! The divine revelations stereotyped in the mighty volume of Nature are viewed as guiding influences throughout eternity—as everlasting incentives to spiritual progress towards the divine Author of all.

Everything around the beatific spirits of that exalted plane seems to breathe, or partake of, the essence of goodness. A God of love, who governs the Universe, in which all things work together for good, has been sensibly realized by the blissful denizens of that happy sphere, where the spiritual vision has become so expanded that the truths and glories of the Unseen are perceived to an extent that is undreamt of in the lowest and lower phases of existence.

Be true, be clear, be pure in all your actions, for such purity will be the talisman by which to gain admission within the portals of those felicitous realms beyond. It will be the light which will illumine the darkness of the lowering clouds of this your rudimentary life—that will dispel the loneliness and break the spell which may at times come upon you. Teach and accustom yourselves to love and admire the true, the good, the beautiful, and that love and admiration will gradually become intensified in proportion as they are

Digitized by Google

exercised. From these prejudices, which have adhered to you as results of mis-education or pernicious habits of thought, you will, by a reverent pursuit of truth, become progressively emancipated, and every course of self-discipline inflexibly adhered to will induce in you a more thorough appreciation of what is good, pure, and elevating. Be ye just and fear naught. Ye may be reviled, slandered, persecuted, but patience, fortitude, and love, must be brought in requisition, and ye will eventually find that their exercise has not been in vain, for you will triumph in the end. Pray that the Spirit of God within each of you may become properly developed—may become the predominant and sovereign power of the race. That spirit, slumbering as it may be, is as certainly possessed by the uncouth nomad as it is by the being within the pale of civilisation. Conscience, the faculty by which goodness and its reverse are judged, that solemn and subdued voice within the soul of every sentient creature, may, by education or adverse circumstances, be distorted or obscured, but 'tis only for a time, for it must ultimately assert its rightful prerogative and lead its possessor onwards along the path of progress—that path, every step of which takes the traveller towards the divine Soul of Goodness, Love, and Truth.

Behold the ship upon whose decks are treading in fancied security some hundreds of souls. The wind, as if exulting in the fate that awaits the barque, wafts her o'er the undulating ocean. The night is dark and foggy, and the watchmen perceive not that the unconscious ship is bearing them on to a crisis in their existence—a crisis which will divest them of the mortal investiture. Onward she plunges to her doom : . . . . a crash—disorder—confusion—shrieks ! and then the souls, so lately encased in mortality, have become disincarnate, and have unexpectedly terminated their voyage in spirit-land !

Mourning and grief succeed the intelligence of the disaster : "death" and "loss" are the terms used when it is spoken of in

Digitized by Google

connection with the voyagers, as if no hope were ever cherished of again meeting them. But if mourning and grief should find vent for a few hundreds who have disappeared from the sight of those who bewail them, how, think you, should the hundreds of millions of souls that face the decks of the great ship of Earth be viewed, as on their physical voyage they speed? List! I hear a voice—a quiet, but yet inexorable voice—the voice of Nature. . . . . Its benevolent mandate has been obeyed—there has been no alternative—and the hundreds of millions of mortals who erstwhile freighted the huge, rolling ship of Earth are now mingling with those who once were similar co-voyagers. This ship of Earth has disembarked unnumbered souls upon the shores of Eternity, and untold numbers more are yet destined to succeed them: every voyage contributing to enrich the ethereal realms of the spirit-world—the domains of Him who guides this and other mighty worlds through the oceans of illimitable space.

From the deck of this ship which is now bearing you along to your eternal homes, look forth into the semi-darkness which surrounds you. See that you dash not upon the breakers; but so guide yourselves that at the end of your physical voyage you may be immediately landed upon the shores of serenity and peace, free of all fear, and with some slight knowledge of the path you will have to tread.

Our intuitive perceptions, Oh! Father, enable us to look towards Thee, the infinite Soul of Light and of Love. Oh! Father of fathers, we can, thanks to Thee, appreciate Thy glorious beauty reigning in all its radiance round about us.

Our spiritual forms and souls have become developed into a brilliancy which, were it possible to be viewed by mankind, would banish darkness from their minds. Through observance of Thine unerring laws we have attained to such a state of brilliancy as to illumine our path which leads to a more exalted condition than we have yet reached; but which, by

Digitized by Google

the encouragement afforded us by these beneficent laws. we are certain of attaining after the necessary efforts have been made.

Through the facilities offered us by those fixed and unerring laws we are, as time rolls on, drawing nearer and nearer towards Thee in purity, goodness, and love : not by forms and ceremonies as was our custom when upon earth, but by the supreme faculty of love which thou hast implanted and developed within us. From Thy great Nature—from Thy mighty Soul—we borrow our power and strength. In our weaknesses we look to Thee for support, for we know that without Thee we are as nothing. So, Oh ! Father, we look to Thee, and Thee alone, as Thou art the Crowning Summit of all that we can think of—of all that the eternal soul can fathom. And, therefore, Oh ! Father, our spiritual forms do lean upon Thee, and our souls fain would drink of the pure fountains which are ever flowing from Thee—of that great and true Life which is ever emanating from Thee, the infinite Source of all.

Light of lights ! Soul of souls ! we who are invisible to the eyes of these to whom we desire to minister, have, by Thy gracious and uplifting influence, risen to a state far above the thoughts or conceptions of man, for which, Oh ! Father, we offer to Thee our grateful tribute of love—to Thee, the Star that ever beckons and encourages us onwards in our lives of immortality. Good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XLV.

DELIVERED 17TH SEPTEMBER, 1875.

GOOD EVENING. In my last lecture I mentioned having stepped on the threshold of a city surrounded by beautifully artistic adornments—of a city whose appearance, in every particular, was in consonance with the spirits who inhabited it. I was led into deeper thoughts as I viewed that vast city, so inconceivably vast (humanly speaking) that no anticipations of mine could ever have succeeded in imagining such magnitude for a place of assemblage of spiritual beings. Everything within that city manifested the most beautiful order and harmony of arrangement. Many cities and towns had I passed through since my advent to the ethereal existence, but they were all far surpassed in refinement and sublimity by the one of which I now speak. From those who, by prolonged existence and profundity of knowledge, are qualified to say so, I ascertained that numbers of the more advanced of the ancient seers or clairvoyants had penetrated to that sphere, descriptions of which had either been misunderstood by them, or grossly misrepresented or exaggerated in their descriptions thereof.

This sublime faculty of clairvoyance is now becoming better understood and appreciated by the more liberal minds on earth, and with due cultivation it will ere long throw such a light upon the spiritual existence as will stimulate mankind to cultivate the better parts of their nature, whereby they will become worthy of entering immediately on their passing

Digitized by Google

into spirit-life upon a more exalted plane than has been the case up to the present time.*

Yes, rely on it that the lofty and sublime disclosures that will result from the exaltation of mind consequent upon clairvoyance are certain (when a recognition of this faculty is thoroughly established) to exert a powerful and beneficial effect, and prompt the race to learn of God, from the ever-open and transparent volume of Nature, to study theology not from the reported opinions of their ignorant and superstitious ancestors, but from the immense scroll of the boundless Universe, comprising, as it does, both the physical and spiritual domains of Nature.

The profound ignorance pertaining to the faculty of clairvoyance on the part of those who were contemporaries of he men designated as prophets and teachers, as well as the lack of knowledge of the latter regarding soul or spirit-power, combined with the unworthy designs of priestcraft and the deplorable ignorance prevalent in subsequent ages, account for those monstrous delusions or pictures of "Heaven" which have been credulously accepted and which have falsely consoled and deceived the minds of so many during a long succession of centuries. But now, thanks to the irresistible (though slow)strides of progress, the veil of ignorance is being withdrawn and the light of knowledge is being freely diffused —that light which, beaming in its effulgence, will ne'er be dimmed, and which will bring in its train universal peace and

* In case this should appear ambiguous I offer a brief explanation. The Lecturer is sanguine that clairvoyance is destined to impart to us such a knowledge of the grand reality that it will act as an incentive to lead a better life here. and thereby entitle us to an admission immediately that we have "shuffled off this mortal coil" to a higher phase of existence than has in the past been generally attained at the new birth of the spirit.—Ed.

Digitized by Google

happiness when the Holy Truth shall prevail and ignorance shall be a demon of the past!

Commensurate with the progress of spirituality and enlightenment in man will be the powers of that clear-seeing soul faculty termed clairvoyance. Some of the ancient clairvoyants may have reached by special gifts* a little beyond the plane of the sphere which I have been latterly essaying to describe; but if so, it has been a very little distance indeed beyond it, for the air which surrounds the spiritual existence in the moral ascent becomes more etherealized, until it is resolved into so pure, so celestial a state as to be utterly unsuited to the most advanced clairvoyants of earth: to whom the golden light of the higher planes of the sixth sphere would appear as darkness; and, therefore, until man has advanced considerably, the more exalted powers of the clairvoyant cannot penetrate much beyond the plane alluded to. Not until the soul has become more united with the spirit, and the streams between them run in gentle harmony, can you hope that psychological voyages to and from the celestial shores of those higher planes will be accomplished. The grand gift of spiritual clairvoyance is ever susceptible of being improved—of being cultivated: it can be advanced by purity of mind and the love of doing good and right.

In the olden times the clairvoyants (the records of some of whose visions have been handed down to you in a meagre and confused state) thought that they had seen what none others had seen, and what would never be revealed again. In fact they thought that the impartial and beneficent Being, who is spoken of by so many names, had condescended to

* The lecturer does not intend the inference to be drawn that any special divine interposition was exercised on behalf of those clairvoyants, but merely that their organisms and temperamental peculiarities favoured them.—Ed.

Digitized by Google

make a special diversion in their favour! And, strange to say, that false and superstitious belief is still entertained by the generality of those who are denominated "Christians!"

As the animalcule immersed in its drop of water, so those of mankind whose minds do not soar above the atmosphere which they inhale, are too prone to think that this globe of Earth is the sole world in the boundless and inconceivably-immense Universe—that its Creator and Governor has stepped out of His way or suspended His laws for the purpose of especially patronising the beings upon this tiny speck in His illimitable Domains! And the calumny or libel (the mildest term I can use) is aggravated by the assertion that His favour has embraced but an infinitesimal portion of the creatures upon this dot, and that the vast majority have been left out in the cold shadow of His displeasure! More exalted conceptions of the government of the Universe will eventuate upon the attainment of a higher state of intelligence; and then that Supreme Power who filleth all space with His divine presence—who inhabits the interstices of eternity—will be thought and spoken of in a manner more worthy and becoming the thoughts and speech of rational, responsible, and immortal beings.

In the thoroughfares of that extensive community no confused tumult was to be observed—nothing to indicate disorder—all was perfect harmony. The architecture was diversified, buildings of various forms and designs lining the broad expanse of the lengthy streets. Each and all of those myriad buildings have been placed there by volition—by mind-power! —for no weary and distressing labour is required for the erection of those spiritual homes! No meretricious decorations are perceivable in or on any portions of the houses; and nowhere, indeed, in that sphere are such things to be seen. Every building appears as if erected by a masterly hand, and is both beautiful and convenient—more so than the imagination

Digitized by Google

of man can fancy or conceive. The edifices stand in a straight and even line, and each habitation reflects the light which emanates from purity and goodness, the result of a highly unfolded spiritual state, every home or dwelling being a reflex of the purity and goodness of its occupants, whose minds are in affinity with truth and righteousness, and are connected with everything that is pure and good.

I saw nothing which could give the slightest clue to detect a sign of poverty or misery. There do not appear the falling shades of night, and the air has ever a balmy influence. Streams of pellucid and crystalline water trickle gently round about each house or dwelling, and the sweetest of flowers grow upon their banks and deck the porches. No locks or keys are required to prevent the admission of intruders. But as all in that grade are loving and true to each other such concomitants of an inferior phase of development are conspicuous by their absence. Those houses are linked together, not by stones and mortar, but by bands of love whose light glistens like the refulgent light of perfect purity!

In those edifices are assembled generations upon generations of families now united in one. They who had once been separated by the waves of space and time are at length blended together in amity and love. Relations and friends are there living in one vast garden, whose fragrant trees bloom for ever in the richest of verdure.

To portray to your minds the mighty powers of progress in connection with spiritual exaltation where strenuous efforts have been exercised, I may state that in the elevated grade of which I am speaking are many who were in the earth-life classed among the most degraded of mortals, some of whom, perhaps, may have spent the greater portions of their lives on earth in prison, but whose lives might have been far different had their training been properly understood and conducted—misunderstood and ill-managed they became outcasts and the

Digitized by Google

scum of society, but now, through the inevitable law of progress, they have by repentance and long continued individual striving freed themselves of all earthly taint, and thus won by their own exertions the high spiritual position they now enjoy.

The prolonged perpetuation of evil on earth is to be ascribed to the errors of society, which cultivates and applauds artificial appearances in lieu of internal purity. It therefore becometh those who are in authority to apply the remedial measures necessary to bring about a more worthy state—to insure the universal culture of morality and refinement which are the birthrights of man and the badges of Nature's true nobility. Yes, ye who are clothed in brief authority, remember that he whom, perhaps, ye are prone to spurn as beneath you, is endowed with that immortal spark which is destined to kindle such a flame as will light him upwards to the pinnacle of spiritual life. In this respect, remember, he is on a par with those who govern, with those who judge, and with those who spurn him.

I again repeat that in that sphere, which for distinction is termed the sixth, are spirits now pure and holy who were once the very opposite. But Immortality has triumphed! Encouraged by higher influences the earth-blots have been expunged, and they now stand upon that exalted plane free from earthly taint or blemish! What reverent, what grateful emotions should agitate us when thinking of such!—that they who erstwhile stood shrinking and degraded upon the lowest step of the moral ladder have now ascended, in obedience to the benevolent mandates of Him who gave them being, so many steps towards His infinite perfection!—that they are now wrapped in indescribable bliss—a bliss from which they can ne'er be dissevered! Robed in purity, adorned by every moral attribute, wrapped in Nature's swaddling clothes, decked like children of purity, they, the once despised, the

Digitized by Google

once degraded beings, are now by the law of progression partakers of the fruit of Eternal Love.

There are no cliques there, no associations, no gatherings for purposes inimical to harmony. There are no rulers there, for all are a law unto themselves. There all seek only to enlighten and benefit others. There divinest strains of music are heard in every house, for each spirit there imbibes a knowledge and love of music. The water, even, as it ripples in its course is musical. The birds are musical—the trees are musical—all is musical. There so gentle, so loving, so kind is each spirit, that those feelings ever flow spontaneously from its form and thoughts. It covets not those things which are beneath the mentality of such advanced spirits as those surrounding it, but covets only the robes of love and simplicity. In short, the houses or homes of those who reside there are delightful scenes of innocence, love, and purity.

Do spirits of that sphere ever move from there, many, perhaps, will ask. Yes, certainly; for, irrespective of the ceaseless impetus given by the inflexible laws of Progress, which ever impel the spirit to aspire to a more exalted state, they enjoy the freedom to roam o'er the vast expanse of Nature—to move at will through the grand and majestic scenes with which she is replete. The bonds of Love, Harmony, and Affinity, are not arbitrary shackles to limit the movements of those spirits who wish for other scenes. No; naught interferes to impede their motions. The desire of beings so far advanced in the scale of progress can be satisfied, for the attainment of such a state precludes the possibility of the spirit infringing the amenities of that state.

The sleep of the spirit in this sphere is a soft and gentle influence, a balmy flower, wreathing around the spirit a repose of such a nature as to transcend your imagination to conceive.

I was conducted to a part of this sphere where there are hills of a nature resembling in a measure the coral reefs of

Digitized by Google

earth. Those hills rise to an altitude far exceeding that of the highest mountains upon your globe, and differed much from all elevations I had hitherto observed. I perceived when I came in close proximity to them that it was possible to penetrate through them and to see the working of the mighty Power that permeated them, by which I was enabled to perceive that the same process of vital energy is there constantly at work as is the case on earth, aye, even in the depths of your ocean (I have since discovered that it was from the vital action of spirit-power, which through increased spiritual vision I have been enabled to see more clearly, that this persistent activity was engendered). The glorious sight then presented to my vision entirely, for a time, engrossed my attention, and with my largely developed spiritual faculties I looked thereon with an admiration beyond description.

(It was here deemed imperative to return the Medium to his normal state; but the discourse was resumed after the lapse of about twenty minutes.)

The farther one explored among those coralline hills, the more interesting did the scenes appear—scenes of such surpassing grandeur that no language of earth is capable of imparting the slightest conception of the unimagined reality. What a scene for an artist!—a scene, however, to which no earthly artist could hope to do justice. Through the powers of the spiritual-life working in the great depths of coral (for such I will term it) the sight was wonderful to behold! Progress seemed to mark it, the Universe to witness it, space and distance to paint it in a new light. We passed through those scenes of gorgeous beauty, and beheld wonders, which excel in an infinite degree even the possible conceptions of mankind, and which impressed upon us at every step of our survey a profound sense of the might and majesty of those laws which underlie, pervade, and incessantly urge on the marvellous work of creation, or, more correctly, evolution.

Digitized by Google

As the inhabitants of this globe, the first sphere of existence, obtain a more extensive knowledge of Nature, including things super-mundane as well as mundane, the more profound will become the conviction of the uniformity of her laws and the analogical sequences which pervade every portion of her domains. Hence, apart from any definite spiritual account, the conviction will be forced upon them that the future existence will consist of a series of spheres of gradual ascent in degrees towards perfection—to realize the ultimate of which is absolutely impossible to man's or spirit's powers of conception.

I was informed by one who was in my sphere of affinity that *that* coralline grade was the resort of spirits who were desirous of becoming auxiliary aids to the more advanced intelligences in the next grade. They sojourn there for a time until their work is consummated, when the eternal fiat of Progress decrees that onward, upward must the migration be. Misunderstand me not when I use the arbitrary expression "must," for there is no despotic compulsion in the development and ascent of the spirit, as everything pertaining to the progressive advance is natural and in harmony with the aspirations of those upon whom the faintest beams of the Light of Truth have dawned.

Passing beyond those hills and arches of coral we came to what may be termed a flowery grade—a grade of delight and magnificence. Those of earth's clairvoyants (Swedenborg among the number) who have ever caught a glimpse of its magnificence could merely portray it in the fantastic ways of imagination. Indeed, no other alternative was open to them, for a description appertaining to the glorious reality is simply impossible. Once witness that scene and its beauty is ever retained upon the tablets of the memory—the impression is indelible and ineradicable. I looked and saw thousands, aye, millions, of miles beyond all fringed with flowers and trees of

Digitized by Google

variegated colours. The homes of the spirits there are almost buried in the lovely floral array, which requires little attention in the matter of training, since a spontaneity of growth and order characterises the florescent loveliness of the upper spheres.

One of the most lovely of the many beautiful flowers in that grade is known by the name of ————-——*, wholly unknown upon this globe. Its size equals that of the palm of a medium-sized hand. It is ornamented with silvery-looking leaves, grows in great profusion, and eclipses all other flowers for the mellow stream of light which is emitted from it. So profuse is the emission of luminosity that the whole grade appears to be illuminated by it. There is a simple magnificence about it which qualifies it to be known as the queen of flowers. Those flowers require not the hand of care to cultivate them, for the will-power of the spirit suffices for that purpose.

That grade I found to be thickly populated, and it needed not a second glance to feel assured that the Grade of Flowers was a very appropriate name. Many of the spirits there delight in wreathing the flowers into various designs and taking them to the spheres below, with the laudable motive that the spirits there may be fired with ambition to aspire to the grade whence they have been brought. In this grade of flowers the spirits are as simple and truthful as the flowers that decorate and surround their homes. How innocently those spirits must live when the powers of their minds are made subservient to furthering the progress of their less fortunate brothers and sisters in spheres beneath their floral grade.

Some of you, I doubt not, have experienced an elevation of soul after having rendered needed assistance to some of your

* The shorthand writer failed to catch the name.

Digitized by Google

fellows. And the brighter spirits who unselfishly devote their efforts to promote the progress of those below them, receive mete reward commensurate with the motives which have actuated them, for in elevating others they thereby exalt themselves in spiritual existence.

I passed on: not myself alone; for when I so speak you must not imagine that I travelled solitarily: not so: for the mind of the progressed and progressing spirit is so wrapped and blended with those for whom he has an affinity that, when travelling, he is ever accompanied by others, sometimes by hundreds or thousands on the same plane as himself.

I observed, as we were moving onwards, that we were approaching a different country, whose shores sparkled with brilliancy, and the waters of whose streams sent forth music which could be heard by us in the distance as it was borne upon the gentle breeze. The lovely clouds that were suspended over the scene appeared to float in clustering richness—forming a grand and magnificent picture of Nature's glorious works. I must now bid you good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XLVI.

DELIVERED 27TH SEPTEMBER, 1875.

GOOD EVENING. Mark this if you please* :—Around me I saw influences of glorious beauty; fruit of golden hue and luscious richness seemed to hang around in wonderful profusion; light of such dazzling brilliancy pervaded the scene as almost to subdue my sight as I gazed upon it. Surrounding me in all beauty were many of those who in ages past dwelt on earth—who had long passed from man's physical eyesight—who have been for many centuries numbered with the dead—the only remembrances of whom may be simple tombstones with an inscription recording the names of those whose mortal investitures have been deposited beneath, many of which are moss-covered, and others completely buried out of sight

That light of dazzling brilliancy revealed to me the path which those long mourned as dead had trodden. Light of lights! Brightness of all brightness! Thy celestial flowers hang around me; with grateful feelings I inhale their heavenly fragrance. I cannot cast my eyes upon them, I cannot enjoy their delicious perfume without receiving a benefit, or without being reminded that Thou, oh! Father, hast been the divine cause of their bloom.

---

* This was to call the attention of the members to the countenance and general demeanour of the Medium, as intimation had been given that at the opening of this seance the utterances would assume an inspirational character. During the flow of words uttered in this phase of mediumship the eyes were open for the first time while under spirit influence, but the Medium was wholly unconscious.—ED.

Digitized by Google

The hosts around invited me to hasten the fulfilment of my self-imposed duty. In many impressive exhortations they said in effect: "Come forward, friend; thy path has not been strewn with roses, or paved with precious jewels. We await thee, friend; hasten, therefore, and accompany us to the land of eternal love and bliss."

I beheld glorious fountains pouring forth their pellucid waters, and my soul languished and yearned to drink of the crystalline streams.

(A pause of several minutes here followed, and the Medium manifested symptoms of having been released from the control of the lecturer, but still remaining in the trance condition, with the eyes closed.)

Again—on the resumption of my accustomed style with the Medium—I bid you good evening. The few words just uttered through the organism of this instrument are the first that have been rendered in the form of inspirational speaking.

I wish the last few sentences of the lecture immediately preceding this to be read. Will you kindly favour me?

(A pause. As the Reporter had not brought the transcript with him of the lecture that was in requisition, the Medium was quickly walked up to where the Reporter sat at the opposite end of the room, and lingering for a brief moment with his left side turned towards that gentleman, was as quickly made to resume his wonted place, when the discourse was immediately commenced. The rapid action and the look of confidence imparted to the countenance of the Medium while he was subjected to the movement just described, impressed us with the belief that the immediate proximity of the Reporter, or of his book with the shorthand copy of the lecture referred to, assisted the memory of the lecturer, so that the thread of the discourse could be instantly connected.)

As I gazed on those sparkling waters, my soul was stirred as it had never been before, and it was brought in still closer

Digitized by Google

union with all that is worthy of admiration. The immeasurable fields of Creation, replete with marks of impartial kindness, love, and good-will, enkindled within my soul a flame that—had there been any vestiges remaining—would have consumed all narrow prejudices and selfish tendencies.

The fountains were of a magnificence unspeakable, and, indeed, incomprehensible by man's conceptions. Imagine the limpid spray extending around for a space equivalent to a thousand and more of your miles! The scene appeared as one marvellous maze of fountains, whose sparkling spray reached to the beautiful and vast glade of flowers which I pictured to your mind's eye in the foregoing lecture.

Not only the sense of sight was gratified in the spirit who lingered in that Grade of Fountains; for sweet odours and scents were also emitted with the sparkling waters from each of these fountains, and the fragrance extended beyond the limits reached by the spray of the fertilizing element.

From the combined rays of light engendered by the incessant play of the fountains, a mellowed stream of luminosity was produced that far outvies in glory everything of a similar nature that has been witnessed upon this physical world or planet. The spirit who gazes upon such a scene is possessed with feelings of intense reverence: he perceives that the myriads of aromatic jets from the multiplicity of fountains, whose beauty, grandeur, and fragrance have elicited his reverential feelings, have not been produced by artificial means, but that they are manifestations of the Ruler of that great system, of which we in the ethereal, as well as you in the physical state, are the ultimate.

Oh! how vividly that sparkling and lovely scene appeared to me as illustrative of the condition which society should assume in the first phase of existence. And truly does it illustrate, in one particular, the state of society in the higher phases of spiritual life, where each soul-jet diffuses around the

Digitized by Google

aura with which it is surcharged : the liquid jets, diffusing beyond the limits of their extension the fragrance of their nature, thus sublimely representing those immortal jets which have proceeded in a more direct manner from the Great Fountain of all !

Would that mankind did essay to emulate those exalted sprays of the Eternal Fountain ! Then earthly life would result in becoming emblematic of the beauty and brightness pertaining to the higher spiritual existence.

I have observed particularly the lives here upon earth of some of the crowned heads, and my observation truly enables me to endorse a saying extant among you, that uneasy lies the brow which wears a regal crown. Yes, verily it is so, and ever has been, and it points a moral to which many men have been virtually blind, namely, that the possession alone of titles and wealth does not constitute happiness. It is the proper use of wealth that will bring happiness in its train. If the possessor of wordly riches do but display the ennobling qualities that legitimately belong to his nature then happiness is his dower. But such a display is the exception and not the rule. It is a display of which human nature, with few exceptions, seems as yet to be incapable, and for this incapacity society, based as it is on corrupt foundations, is amenable. Society on earth is founded upon erroneous principles—upon a misconception of the soul-power which actuates the individual, and the results—the legitimate results—have been a low ebb in the stream of morality, entailing discord and war throughout the world.

What a mournful commentary upon the efforts (the professed and apparent efforts I mean) of those self-asserted teachers who, during the past eighteen hundred years, have constituted themselves the directors of morals ! Futile has been their teaching ! Aye—worse than futile, for absolute harm has been the issue of such false and misleading teaching.

Digitized by Google

In the generations that are passed the time and talents of the major portion of these self-constituted preceptors have been engaged in the uprearing of sectarian associations, which have contributed more than their quota towards perpetuating (to say nothing of creating) the disorganization so conspicuous throughout the nations of so-called Christendom. The efforts of the few noble souls (alas! how few!) who have attempted to follow in the footsteps of the worthy Nazarine have been overwhelmed by the counteracting influences of those who have been inimical to an era of peace and goodwill which the great Teacher inculcated. Hence, instead of union there has been and still is, disunion; instead of love and charity there are their opposites abounding in all their hideousness.

Through the crushing domination of sectarian usurpation mankind have been restrained from exercising their spiritual endowments. An atmosphere of light and liberty has not been permitted them, but over that atmosphere a veil of despotism, bigotry, and fanaticism, has been cast, in the unrighteous endeavours to conceal those spiritual truths, a true knowledge of which by the masses would free them from dominant and debasing ignorance. Wretched, indeed, have been the results of such dominion; folly and not wisdom, ignorance and not knowledge, misery and not happiness, have been in the ascendant. Persecution and war have sent millions of beings before their proper time into the spirit-world. The mind of man has been enslaved, and his most sublime powers have been restrained by the arbitrary rule of those whom circumstances have favoured to act the *rôle* of despots.

This state of things cannot and will not much longer exist. Indeed, to the merest sciolist the dawn of a brighter day will have appeared upon the social horizon, for the times are pregnant of better things that are in store for the race. In the near future ignorance shall be for ever dispelled by the

Digitized by Google

mighty power of Truth. A resurrection from moral degradation shall ensue, and one faith, one interest, bringing peace and happiness, will pervade, and be embraced by the whole race of mankind.

Such a result, doubtless, transcends the conceptions of the ordinary mind ; but that light which has so long been hidden from the world has now commenced to glimmer, and gives promise (which will be fulfilled at no remote date) of so illuminating the minds of mankind that each individual will be enabled to perceive that he will conduce to his own interests (mark well, his true interests) by making them subservient to the interests of his fellows ; that what is his good is the good of all the race.

Yes, mankind have the promise that such a result will be brought about : that the sun of improvement and progress will disperse the clouds of the present hypocrisy, superstition, and bigotry, and universally diffuse the rays of truth, love, and virtue.

On passing through the grade of fountains I was very much impressed with the beauty of what I have feebly attempted to portray to you ; *how* feebly you can only realise when you become spectators of those scenes. A broad line of demarcation must be drawn between the inconsequent and inadequate descriptions of spiritual scenes, as given in these lectures, and the glorious reality of those scenes. I therefore pray that none of the allusions thereto may be viewed in any other light than mere cursory glances ; for (and I trust that you will pardon the reiteration) no matter how comprehensively they may be portrayed or descanted upon in earthly language, it is not possible that justice, or anything approximating to justice, can be done to the actual magnificence of the brighter spheres of the spiritual existence.

On entering into conversation with some who had learned particulars anent the seventh sphere I ascertained that there

Digitized by Google

existed no glaring difference in the manners and undertakings of the spirits pertaining to that sphere and those of the sphere designated as the sixth, and that the most essential difference consisted simply in the more lofty conceptions of the denizens of that exalted sphere—more sublime, and truer, conceptions of that Infinite, Spiritual Energy, that all-pervading Essence, that Divine Mind, which permeates the mighty expanse of Infinitude.

I met with many who had passed centuries of time in that grade, basking in the richness of light, in the bright beams which illuminated their lives in that glorious sphere. Among them were those whose exertions had benefited mankind in a manner that has been recorded on the imperishable scroll of progress. Those exertions have been unrecognised as yet by those who are confined by the physical body, a release from which will be succeeded by a knowledge of the fact of man's receptive faculties for spiritual influx, and how it has acted as an incentive to improvement, development, and progress. This subtle, spiritual influence, is beyond the comprehension of man in his present state of progress. It is an influence too subtle, too ethereal for man's present capacity to grasp.

Around me in loving communion were those upon whom the ties of Nature demanded that I should centre my dearest affections. My children had assumed the lovely forms which beneficent Nature had intended. Radiant with beauty, purity, and innocence, they were now eternally associated with me, imparting and reciprocating a fragrance of affection in keeping with the exalted surroundings of their existence. There I found among my associates some whom darkness and misconceptions had led astray while existing in the primogenial state; for they then really believed (as they informed me) that they were in direct communion with Him who rules!

Forms that have long passed on to other homes have stood upon those fragrant paths and inhaled the incense which

Digitized by Google

floated around Earth's greatest and most brilliant ornaments have, in this progress upwards, lingered on this Verge of Ascension, and gained a keener insight into the ultimate destiny that awaits the immortal principle of which each and every one is the possessor.

Yes: upon that plane of splendour—upon that world of brilliant beauty – every spirit who has now attained an elevation beyond it has sojourned to prepare and qualify himself for the gradation that awaited him.

In that sphere the old book (concerning certain portions of whose records there have been, in different ages of this world, such acrimonious and sanguinary contentions) is, as might be expected, viewed in a light very different to that of those who cherish it as a volume containing records directly inspired by the Great Positive and Infallible Mind. From their experience and greatly increased knowledge the denizens of that spiritual plane are enabled to separate the worthy from the unworthy portions; and I may add that the excision of the latter would reduce the bulk of the volume not a little. The separation of the good from its opposite is not difficult to perform by those to whom the truth is known: to those who have passed to a sphere where they are associated with Truth and Reality. But man needs not to be transferred to the inner sphere of life ere he can perceive the genuine from the spurious in the book referred to; for, if once free from prejudice and bigotry, not the slightest difficulty will be experienced in sifting the chaff from the wheat—the derogatory from the valuable. It is certainly strange that this fastidious generation should consent to the retention of so much that is objectionable (I may say disgustingly so) in that ancient tome. Under the same cover are passages ranging from the sublime to the ridiculous. And not only so, friends, as ye who have read with unbiassed minds will grant: there are sentences innumerable therein contained which may be

Digitized by Google

designated as something worse than ridiculous—nothing less than absolutely immoral. Exert every influence to have them expunged and consigned to oblivion, retaining only those passages which are deserving of retention; for there are some well worthy of preservation which may be classed as gems of thought, and which will impress conviction upon any thought-loving mind.*

Salvation through belief in a book! What an insult to the reason—to the common sense of mankind! It has been said so; but can it be reasonably supposed that any rational creature has derived a cherishing thought upon what is termed the "death bed" by a mere belief in the plenary inspiration of a book which contains so much that is nauseous, and worse than nauseous—monstrous and blasphemous?

Respect and venerate all that is worthy of your respect and veneration in that or any other volume; but place not your reliance upon any records, other than those stamped indubitably upon your souls, as possessing any efficacy in guiding you to a sphere of Light, Love, and Beauty.

Awake to the light of Truth ye credulous slumberers in old superstitious traditions, perpetuated by priestcraft for selfish ends, and let reason regain her rightful sway in religion as in all else. Disentangle the sublime silver threads of moral and righteous ethics from the mass of priestly dogmas and

* To those who, after years of mental struggle, have emancipated themselves from the still popular, but false and superstitious reverence for "the Bible" as a whole, it is truly surprising how they, as rational beings, could have so long read and listened to, without feelings of the utmost disgust having been aroused in their minds, the numerous grossly immoral and God-dishonouring passages contained therein. As yet, all the cunning and ingenuity of an astute and interested priesthood have been unable to adduce one rational vindicatory plea for the claim of special divine authority for this book, in which so many lewd, revolting, and contradictory passages are set forth in unmistakable language.—Ed.

Digitized by Google

senseless creeds which cannot stand a rational analysis, with which the former have been cunningly and designedly interwoven, and let the divine and golden rule of doing unto others as you would be done by constitute the sole rule for your daily guidance, since a well spent life is the only royal road to supernal happiness.

Our friend "Time" will render the invocation inspirationally. Good night.

Thou Great Illuminator—Light of Lights—Parent of all: we thank Thee—fervently and gratefully thank Thee—for the freedom we enjoy of roaming o'er these bright scenes of light and love in all their brilliant and gorgeous array. From Thy Eternal and Authentic Volume of Truths, Thou Divine Author, we have gleaned a knowledge of the all-pervading principles which alike govern the merest atoms as they do the mighty spheres of Immensity; and with the acquisition of that knowledge, which we have gradually imbibed, have been engendered within our souls feelings of increased love and reverence for Thee, the Divine Source of all.

We feel assured, Gracious and Mighty Being, that, Omniscient as Thou art, in our invocations to Thee a redundancy of words are vain: that Thou canst read our hearts—our inmost thoughts—yea, even our souls. Feeling thus assured, Oh! Father, we merely invoke Thee to look to our thoughts as illustrative of the gratitude which animates us for the condescension vouchsafed us by Thee, the Giver of all. Accept then, Oh! Deity, the sentiments of our minds—our souls—for thanks: we have no words commensurate with the feelings which stir within us: our souls, suffused with gratitude to Thee, soar above the aid of words—of feeble language—by which to express ourselves. The immortal essence which Thou hast breathed into our beings is redolent with thanks and gratitude to Thee now and for ever. Good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XLVII.

DELIVERED 22ND SEPTEMBER, 1875.

GOOD EVENING. Nature is inexhaustible! Confine your view of her proceedings to that piece of work termed man, and behold the diversity of her detailed manifestations! In each individual man you find a different character existing. One may be so organized as to manifest to his fellows the least amiable side of his character, while the most worthy traits are concealed from the view of the ordinary observer, traits of genuine beauty which would amply repay closer observation. We in the spiritual world, however, are enabled to penetrate more closely into this matter than you who are confined by the mortal investiture.

Of the myriads of human beings I have observed since my spiritual advent I have never met with two who bore an exact resemblance to each other. How is this? Because Nature works not in one mould. In all her manifold, incalculable productions, nowhere does she present an exact parallel!

For the diversified characters which abound in mankind Nature, however, is not wholly responsible or answerable. Between man's present state and Nature's immutable laws a marked divergence is apparent, which divergence is the legitimate, the natural result of a deviation from the path which should have been followed by Nature's masterpiece. A profound student of Nature will have the conviction forced upon him that harmony and truth are imperishably stamped upon every manifestation of that which he studies, and that the multiplicity of degrading personal qualities are mainly the

Digitized by Google

result of an erroneous conception and perversion of the principles of life—the principles both of physical life and those which constitute the immortal part of man—the internal spiritual principles.

Nature—impartial and benign as she is—intended that a crown of joy and happiness should be placed upon the brow of each of her children, but a divergence from the paths marked out for them has led them into the anomalous condition which they now present, but from which, rest assured, development and progress will eventually extricate them, for their faculties and capacities, instinct with the principle of progression, will ever tend towards more sublime results.

The surroundings of the earthly existence—its cares, its troubles, its pains—may for a time subdue that spark which has proceeded from the great Sun of suns, but it will ultimately be fanned into a luminosity of such inconceivable brightness that the most vigorous imagination of man is only capable of conceiving a very slight idea of THE GRAND REALITY.

Nature is not solely responsible for the premature decrepitude so frequently manifest in the human frame. It is only natural, however, that suffering should be entailed when the laws which govern it are infringed or disregarded.

If man did but exercise the power which he possesses of subduing those passions, which are unfavourable to his happiness, what a different aspect the world would present! Happiness would then take the place of misery, the real that of the artificial; and the impure elements of ignorance and selfishness would be displaced by the unpolluted atmosphere of knowledge and truth. It is not the province of Nature to arrest the necessary gradual decay of the human form; but with her outspread hand she is ever ready to relieve the crushed, broken, and shattered spirit which is confined in the withered form, as she is ever prepared to bring forth the spirit

Digitized by Google

and take it to the higher or superior state so frequently spoken of. Does it carry the resemblance of the decrepit physical form into that superior state? Yes, for a time it does; but mark ye well: a faint—a distant resemblance—sufficient to ensure its identity; for the angularities and forbidding aspect of the wasted and diseased body, are replaced by a symmetrical and prepossessing spiritual appearance.

Nature, in her actions throughout the unspeakably vast Universe, including both the physical and spiritual worlds, is ever steadfast, ever consistent, ever composed: she does nothing quickly—she is not inclined to be speedy; and she pursues the even tenor of her course, regardless of any strictures, comments, or criticisms. As she carefully and gradually superintends and encourages the budding and blooming of the flower, so the same superintendence and encouragement are manifested in regard to the birth and progress of the spirit in the sublime and ethereal existence.

The ultimate grade of the Sixth Sphere I shall now briefly glance at. Its surroundings, as you might naturally suppose, are glorious to behold! All the grand pictures and inventions of spirit and mind have there attained a higher—a more sublime state. There are there no keys held by "saints" who grant admission within the portals of "Heaven": there are there no "dragons" to guard the gates: no "angels with wings" crowding the walks. No, no—naught of the kind: the ancient clairvoyant's visions, as recorded, are not there realised; but all there are existing in unrestricted freedom and happiness. No trace is there observable of disagreement —of conflict of opinions: thorough harmony reigns supreme o'er all.

With its broad domains, its bowers of purity and love, its tall and stately palaces, and celestial scenes, it is not surprising that little desire is manifested by the spirits of that inconceivably sublime grade to pass beyond it. But Progress and

Digitized by Google

Development ultimately force compliance with their benevolent mandates. Onward—forward!—it must be so: Nature demands it, Development urges it, Progress effectuates it!

Vast and mighty heights are there crowned with a richness which the accumulation of earth's wealth multiplied ten million times could not equal. There seem to be there all the jewels that unnumbered worlds could bring. Innumerable planets appeared suspended like vast blazing chandeliers, diffusing such a light as would be unbearable to the sight of man, and of so resplendent a nature that no definite conception can be formed of them by his mind. Trees, bearing the appearance of having embellished this grade of which I am speaking during an inconceivable space of time, stand in beautiful order and regularity, their leaves shining with an electrical and effulgent light.

No repulsion, no opposites, no antagonistic principles, but as all the myriads of mighty orbs that are distributed throughout the infinitude of space are incessantly reciprocating particles with each other, so do the unnumbered occupants of this grade, termed the last of the sixth sphere, form a combined association of spirits animated by mutual affinities: of spirits who have long been emancipated from the imbecile absurdities of superstition and its offspring sectarianism: of spirits who have long since abjured the awe with which they were taught to fear, and to cringe and kneel to Him who rules and governs in love the incalculable worlds in the immensity of space. "Religion,"—man-made religion of senseless creeds and absurd ceremonies—is there a thing of the past; but religion pure and simple—a priceless treasure—is inhaled and exhaled by every happy spirit: a religion in which no anthropologic proclivities are indulged, a religion of love and harmony, of reverence and devotion, and one commensurate with the degree of refinement and sublimity

Digitized by Google

attained by spirits so far advanced on the endless ladder of eternal progress.

You may ask: Do spirits return to earth to communicate from that grade. As a rule, no; they do not communicate with earth's people in a direct manner, as I am doing, but in an indirect manner—by proxy as it were, or through the medial influence of a spirit pertaining to a sphere less exalted; for the refined and superfine nature which the spirit of so elevated a grade has acquired renders communion with a physical sphere a matter of no ordinary difficulty—indeed, in many instances, an impossibility. The apparent proximity of the physical to the spiritual world, in the case of those who have thus far advanced, however, enables the occupants of this elevated grade—endowed as they are with greater knowledge and largely increased penetrating vision—to commune indirectly, if not directly, with those of the physical sphere, if needs be, at a very brief notice. In the case of those spirits whose state of sublimity precludes them from gratifying personally the desire of their souls spiritual media are—as has just been said—brought into requisition.

The tendency of the human mind (the mind still curbed by mortality) to conceive of the spiritual world as composed of physical matter, with its limits and conditions, imparts a very false conception indeed of the world of spirit, which should be thought of as a number of spheres irrespective of locality and bounds. The spiritual spheres, friends, are as a whole not contracted or limited by any despotic lines of demarcation, but they extend indefinitely, and yet are in closer proximity to you than is generally imagined. The mind of man being so contracted, a correspondingly contracted conception of the ethereal world is the result; and hence the obscurity in connection with the subject.

(The lecturer here announced that he was necessitated to release his control of the Medium, who required a quarter of

Digitized by Google

an hour or twenty minutes in the normal state. After the lapse of the last mentioned space of time the discourse was resumed.)

Prejudices, friends—especially what are termed "religious" prejudices—are deep seated: they are difficult to eradicate. The gates of free thought are ajar, but prejudice acts as a barrier to an entrance therein. If Truth exists, why should you fear to investigate it? If a knowledge of Truth is estimable or desirable, why impose restrictions or oppositions to its acquisition? Why not sanction its becoming universally embraced? From those who claim the exclusive right to enforce their own opinions an answer to these questions should be required: yes, an answer from those "spiritual shepherds" whose prototypes, in the ages that have passed, tortured and put to death such of their "sheep" as dared to stray beyond the boundary marked out for them! Dark and deplorable picture!—which nought can efface; for, irrespective of its artificial delineation, it has been indelibly photographed by Nature: a cameo of sanguinary hue has been produced by Nature* that will, throughout eternity, portray a correct history of the bigotry, ignorance, and inhumanity of man in the earlier stages of his advance to an atmosphere of light and truth.

Man's course is upward and onward. A light is now dawning upon the earth which will reveal to man the true stand he should take in existence. He must ere long perceive the position which the Creator marked out for him. The tide of Truth ebbs not: it ever rises; and it will flood the earth so that mankind will float buoyantly upon its surface, and be enabled to peer and search into its depths.

---

* Allusion is here made to what Psychometry gives promise of practically revealing: viz., that every particle of our material sphere *contains within itself the photographic image of every object whose shadow may have fallen upon it.*

Digitized by Google

Ne'er speak of the subject you term spiritualism with the hope of converting direct from Error to Truth. Rather seek to sap the foundations of error and prepare a way for the true basis that is to replace them. Seek to instil into the minds of those with whom you are solicitous of sharing the Truth the necessity of freedom of thought—the exercise of that noble gift which will eventually enable them to welcome the truths that are as yet obscurely manifested. Once dispel the clouds of superstition and prejudice which darken their minds, and they immediately become subject to all the influences of Nature, with whose laws they will be in harmony. Ne'er attempt to force the truth, which you possess in your own minds, into the minds of others before they are prepared to receive it. You might as well scatter seeds on a bare rock and expect them to grow, or separate a tree from its roots, and expect the severed trunk to bear fruit.

The fearless demand of this philosophy designated as spiritualism is that its phenomena should be subjected to a searching investigation—an investigation divested of all bigotry and prejudice, and it is the duty of those whose circumstances qualify them to investigate to do so in a spirit worthy of the better attributes of the race, whose unity, elevation, and happiness, will eventuate upon a correct disclosure being made and acknowledged of this higher science, which as yet is so generally despised and ridiculed. Upon the foundations of that disclosure can be reared a religion of moral and intellectual progress—a religion that will cleanse and purify the worlds upon which man can take his stand in all the beauty and glory of his nature.

Bigotry and prejudice are among the most marked and conspicuous features of the sects of the religion termed "Christian"—these two baneful qualities effectually repel, in those whose minds are poisoned by them, any new revelations of truth. For this wretched state of things

Digitized by Google

ecclesiastical bodies collectively are responsible, but each member thereof will individually have to answer. They have taught (and, may I not say, they still teach?) that any disclosures of new truth (that is, truth hitherto undisclosed to mankind) are sinful and impious.

In morality those conservative "religionists" are far behind the standard of some of the people whom they consider as "savages," and whom they profess to view with commiseration, and as being worthy of proselytising to their religious tenets that they claim possess saving efficacy—efficacy to save them from "the wrath to come" *of a God of Love!*

What a pitiable—what a mournful aspect is presented to us in the surroundings of the sects termed Christian! And each striving to rise over and to outdo the other! What a burlesque upon religion—as it should be!

That the gentle Nazarine has been and is grieved (Oh! how much, words cannot express) at such deplorable perversion of the devotional instincts of so large a portion of the human race—grieved to think that he should have been the cause—the innocent cause—of such perversion, need not to be told you who have been emancipated from the absurd and pernicious doctrines so falsely ascribed to him. But he, the bright, the loving, the gentle spirit, observes with sublime pleasure and delight the growth of that great tree so long hidden from the mental vision of mankind, under whose umbrageous foliage unborn generations will tranquilly repose and partake of the delicious and invigorating fruit suspended from its branches, which will eventually overspread the world. Yes, the proleptic faculties of such elevated spirits as the noble Reformer of eighteen hundred years agone, enable them to perceive that the branches of this mighty tree will one day, not far remote, wave triumphantly over this now crepuscular world of mentality, and that their shade will be of such a nature as to

Digitized by Google

for ever exclude ignorance and superstition from reposing therein.

Such will be the effects of the matured growth of the tree of spiritual knowledge, whose roots are deeply embedded in Nature, and whose bloom will diffuse a universal fragrance around, uniting the whole race of man as one amicable family, whose members will be animated by truth and good-will, love, and justice to each other.

The lamentation of the prophet as recorded in that volume which has been falsely represented by the priesthood as containing the directly inspired utterances of the Author of the Universe, is just as applicable to this generation as to the one to which the prophet addressed himself, saying: "Go unto this people and say, hearing, ye shall hear, and shall not understand, and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive; for the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing; and their eyes have they closed lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears; and understand with their heart, and should be converted."

Drive away the historical mists that becloud men's souls. No mediator is required between the Father and his children; but a direct appeal to that Parent who enwraps us all in His love and beauty, and whose marvellous manifestations in effect tell us that He who is our Creator and our life, is sufficient to ensure you peace and happiness hereafter as well as here.

Look to Him—the Eternal and Infinite One—who brought you into existence through the workings of His divine laws: look to Him with perfect faith and trust: ever centre your thoughts upon that unspeakably-glorious Being to whom you owe all that you possess and enjoy; and you will best please Him and ensure your own immediate felicity by striving to do to those whom you meet with in your earthly career the same as you would be done by. 'Tis a golden, loving, and sublime rule: What ye would that men should do unto you, do ye

Digitized by Google

likewise the same unto them"—a rule which embraces the good, the true, the beautiful.

Let a truthful character be your adornment: let not the light of Truth ever fade. Use to its utmost powers the God-crowning gift with which He has blessed you; for the office of Reason is to search, explore, investigate. Heed not the jeers and ridicule of your fellows; but tranquilly pursue your search, your explorations, your investigations with the earnestness and devotion of beings who are convinced that they have a heritage founded on the unerring and eternal principles of Nature. In such a pursuit you are but doing your duty and performing your quota towards the amelioration of the world; for every revelation of Truth tends towards the devoutly-desired consummation. In such a pursuit you will respond to the demands made by your nature, and meet with the approbation of the bright and glorious beings who are ever observing with interest the gradual but certain emergence of the race from an atmosphere of darkness and error to one of light, truth, and happiness.

Ere concluding this hastily-delivered discourse I will briefly advert to a scene in the higher spiritual life—a scene, the account of which, perhaps, will be read with scorn and incredulity by your clerical friends who preach that continual heavenly-anthem singing is the main item in the Celestial programme.

In that world, my friends, I have seen its joyous and grateful inhabitants, instead of manifesting the fantastic, whimsical and irrational symptoms which a sacerdotal hypothesis has imagined are displayed by the winged mythical beings spoken of as "angels," giving expression to their joy and gratitude in motions of their spiritual bodies that are somewhat analogous to the more chaste "measures" indulged in at entertainments among yourselves. Yes (laugh and sneer who will) countless numbers of happy spirits have I

Digitized by Google

seen joining in the graceful movements analogous to those which you designate as dancing, their motions being attuned to the most perfect and sweetest strains of music! This statement, doubtless, with many others that have been made, will meet with the unqualified denunciation of those who entertain aversion to the unfolding of truths which are antagonistic to what they have been told to believe and consider as sacred. But truth, being immortal, cannot be affected in the slightest degree by either denunciations or praises, by belief or disbelief. Not the verdict and approbation of men, then, but the verdict and approbation of the Eternal, Positive Mind alone, are essential for the maintenance and promulgation of truth, which is as immutable and eternal as God Himself, who is the very essence of all truth.

Then fear ye not! Press forward, and exercise the noble faculty with which you are gifted. Dread not coming in contact with new truths—they will not corrupt you—but embraced in a reverent spirit they will eventually lead you into the way of all truth and joy eternal.

In conclusion, I wish you to remember that the allusions I have made to any subject must be viewed as mere brief glances, for I have been incapacitated from doing otherwise than cursorily allude to them, in defective language, my principal object being to present the ideas, and I am acutely sensible that such have been submitted to you in a very feeble and ineffective manner. However, with the instrument at command the musician has discoursed the best music in his power; he could do no more. Good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XLVIII.

DELIVERED 23RD SEPTEMBER, 1875.

GOOD EVENING. Your patience has been exercised in awaiting the entrancement of the Medium, and I have to offer an apology for such an undue trial.*

At every meeting here, friends, I encounter additional difficulty. At every step in the task I have essayed the less easy is it of accomplishing. The surroundings of the physical sphere have become too gross for the advanced and advancing spirit. You will, therefore, I doubt not, bear with me in the imperfections of the utterances which will close my series of lectures. You have hitherto manifested patience and forbearance while I have been feebly attempting to enlighten your minds, and I have well-founded confidence that you will extend those exemplary virtues on my behalf until the close of the discourses (which will be on the evening after next lecture) when I shall have the unpleasant part to perform of saying "good bye," but not—oh! no—a final "good bye," for we shall meet again in the Mighty Beyond (I am now speaking from your standpoint)—in that world where earth's existence will be thought of by you, as it is by us merely as a fitful dream.

The winter of existence having been displaced by a glorious and everlasting summer, I felt in that grade like the mariner who has reached the coast and cast anchor in a secure and serene haven, after having been tossed about upon the

*About a half hour beyond the usual time for commencing the seances had elapsed this evening ere the medium was controlled.—ED.

Digitized by Google

wild and stormy ocean. But, unlike the mariner, who expects to again encounter the conflicts of the elements, I am at length beyond the reach of vicissitudes—my soul has now attained halcyon quiescence!

Many of the multitudinous groups of this grade belonged to generations long prior to the era when I came into existence—who lived upon this rudimentary sphere of earth in days even darker, sadder than mine own. But no dark, no sad reminiscences now interpose. Kind Nature has thrown a veil over such, and happiness unalloyed is the portion of the sojourners in this glorious realm.

The first impulse that thrilled through my form and animated my spiritual faculties on joining this grade was a rapturous delight at meeting and associating with such glorious beings. The influence of the bright scenes and glorious forms was great, and its effect was deeply impressed upon my soul. Minds that have gone before us—that have advanced to a higher and more celestial sphere, waft to us a soft fragrance of deep and everlasting love whose riches are unspeakable, they cannot be thought of or comprehended by the human mind. Oh! what a glorious thing it is to thus stand upon the margin of a world and behold unnumbered orbs performing their mighty movements around their respective centres! Beholding thus, surrounded by the sweetest influences, and not one tittle or tinge of sadness or dulness upon the features of those around, the elevating feelings of religion, manifested by reverence, gratitude, and love, stir within the spirit-soul. 'Tis impossible for you to conceive of the feelings which animated me as I beheld those indescribable scenes and thought of the marvellous laws which controlled them—of that wonderful, mighty principle, which pervades every corner, crevice, and interstice of the vast and inconceivable Universe, whose millions and millions of worlds are controlled by the same subtle and energetic

Digitized by Google

principle, the emanation from the great and inexhaustible Fountain of Love and Truth!—a knowledge of which begets in the spirit unbounded confidence in and love for Him who rules supremely and beneficently over all.

The gardens of this grade are embellished to an extent perfectly beyond the imagination of man to conceive. Suffice it to say that Nature, in them, appeared to inestimable advantage —as if she there delighted to exhibit her beauty and kindness: her beauty in the richness of colouring with which the foliage abounded: her kindness in the profusion of fruits with which the trees were laden—so profuse that the limbs or branches from which the various fruits were suspended bent under the weight.

To those gardens I observed the spirits flocked in great numbers, and partook of the luscious fruits, which are transparent and of a beautiful colour, and are exactly suited to blend with the refined nature of the spirit. Under the umbrageous trees bands or groups of spirits sat or reclined in a manner similar to yourselves in the shady groves of your earth, when you are desirous of shelter from the rays of the orb around which your planet revolves.

The hills presented no rugged display; but, towering to a majestic elevation, showed on all sides an unbroken and beautifully smooth surface.

The canopy ahead known to you as sky never there becomes dark and dreary; but is ever of a silvery brightness and transcendent loveliness; and the effect of the atmosphere upon the spirit-mind is such as to ever remind it that still higher states are its destiny.

Let us see if the curtains can be drawn aside so that we may give you a brief and imperfect glimpse of the scenes beyond. . . . . It is almost like breaking from earth, and passing to those rotary and revolving worlds which are visible from this globe: to those marvellous and

Digitized by Google

magnificent worlds, contemplation of which should elevate the mind of man, and lead it to a consideration of the mighty and beneficent attributes of that Supreme Ruler who has marshalled them into existence, and caused them to move with unerring precision in the orbits assigned them, and also of those attributes of Power, Wisdom, Goodness, Justice, Mercy, Truth—Power, as is displayed in the design, creation, and control of the countless worlds in the unsurveyed depths of space—Wisdom, as is manifested in the further evolution and expansion of other orbs, and in adapting every planet to the sun of its central attraction, and of every satellite to the planet to which it is attached—Goodness, for the accomplishment of a glorious and sublime consummation, in the perfect adaptation of things to the grand end in view—Justice, universal justice, is shadowed forth in the control of the millions and myriads of suns, planets and satellites which obey, and adhere to, the universal law that has been established—Mercy, the perfect attributes of mercy, as are to be seen upon this world of earth (not straying for the present beyond its limits): in the consummation of the end desired by its divine Author—in diffusing light upon it from the centre to which it belongs—in the distribution of an atmosphere whereby to sustain life, in the development of the necessary elements, &c. And Truth, eternal truth, the inherent principle of the Divine Mind, has displayed the perfection of all attributes in the gradual development of each world from the condition primitively existing, and the consummation of every good end contemplated.

What do we see now that the curtains are withdrawn? A world more comprehensive than the whole of the grades —than the whole of the spheres through which I have passed! My vision rests for a moment upon that world while I here stand before you controlling this tenement of flesh (the Medium).

Digitized by Google

In that world are cities extending as far as the sight of the eye can reach—as far as the human mind can imagine, all blazing in brightness, and studded with the truest, richest, and most beautiful jewels. There is no lack of ornate architecture to enhance the magnificent scene. Reflecting the blazing brightness, to an extent that would blind the physical vision, are golden domes surmounting ancient palaces of marvellous grandeur and elegance. Stirred by the gentle zephyrs the foliage of the stately trees wave as if paying a tribute to the celestial prospect, that foliage displaying silvery and golden tints, and all the charming colours of the rainbow. Stars of wondrous light appear to hang close to the scene, and with a transparent and magnifying power seem to electrify and glorify the whole. But what surprised me not a little is that I perceived in that exalted sphere beasts of a noble mien walking about in grand and splendid form. Birds, too, I saw there sitting, with a glittering movement of eye, on their perches, without the slightest feeling of awe or fear, and with their gorgeous plumage adding enchantment to the scene, whose richness and lustre appeared at first sight to be incomprehensible to the spiritual observation. The spirits there seemed to be laden with the most precious of celestial jewels. The fountains even essaying to add harmony to the scene, for the waters as they flow give out sweet music in consonance with everything around!

I did not perceive any beings in that wondrous sphere moving with slow and feeble step. There are no grey hairs or wrinkled forms there, the concomitants betokening the old age of earth, but each spirit has been eternally transformed (it has been no sudden transformation, but a gradual change) into beauty and refinement. All have been so changed by the grand processes of Nature, whose results in that sphere manifest a higher state of perfection than in spheres of a less exalted character.

Digitized by Google

The numberless spirits who are incessantly meeting and intermingling with each other do so in all love and kindness; not one appears to be a stranger to another, but all are intimate and mutually participate in and reciprocate the kindness and love which breathe around. Every movement seems to be characterized by judgment, precision and grace, which unfailingly control all their actions. There veneration for the divine Cause of Causation—the Father of all—is deep and profound.

Into that sphere of glory (some of whose characteristics I have briefly described, having, by the penetrating power with which I am endowed, been enabled to perceive even while standing upon this nether world) I was introduced by a band of glorified spirits. Their forms were transparent, and the inmost thoughts of their souls were made manifest. Each brow was decked with flowers of the richest growth. Dresses of the finest materials, girdled around the waist by silver bands, hung in loose and graceful folds about the forms of all. Choice of colours was not restricted, for the robes were of diversified hues; but all—as in everything else—in judicious taste and in chaste beauty. In regard to colours, the colours of spirits' garbs—I will mention that which will, to some of you, perhaps, savour of the miraculous. Innumerable numbers of spirits, with robes of a similar hue, I have seen clustered together; and by the wonderful sympathy of mind and soul existing among them, they have by the united exercise of volition, chameleon-like, instantaneously changed their robes into a different colour! Such is an example of the potency of will in connection with spirits who are so far progressed! By no infringement of Nature's edicts has such a result been brought about. No, naught of the kind: indeed, it is an expression of absurd and faulty import to say that the laws of Nature can be infringed or violated: they simply cannot be. The rapid displacement of one colour by another in obedience

Digitized by Google

to the will-power of spirits is sanctioned by the decrees or laws of Nature—by a process refined and striking—a process which I cannot hope to explain to you, otherwise than by saying that it is by the concentrated exercise of the power of will such a consummation is induced.

On this world of earth the physical eye is prone to get weary of the same unchanging scenes; but there (in the sphere of which I am speaking) the eyesight never wearies; for Nature is so bountiful that prospects that may be likened to a panorama are ever fascinating the spiritual vision, which, in consequence, never tires. Variations of scenic interest are there ever to be met with at a moment's notice. For instance: a spirit is sojourning in a city, whose structures perhaps are of a material resembling your purest marble, but infinitely finer, if that spirit is desirous of a change of scene the desire is gratified by a simple and natural exertion of soul-force; and in a moment he is in view of that which was desired—perhaps a lovely grove or garden which abounds with all that the most fastidious could wish for. In possession of such wonderful psychological puissance, combined with celestial love, peace and purity, think ye that it is possible for those spirits to be otherwise than happy? It would, indeed, be marvellous were they not so!

That happiness—how pure and elevated!—transcending the highest conceptions which mankind can possibly form. Happiness without alloy illuminates their countenances with a lustrous radiance which is indescribable—which no language can express. The purity of their souls is typified by the expression of their countenances, which beam with affability, gentleness, love, and other inestimable qualities: each serving as an index to the attainment of even more elevated and perfect spheres of existence.

I had now reached a state in which my mind will for ever remain serene: it will never more be troubled with

Digitized by Google

those great throbbing thoughts which were wont to rise to such stupendous heights only to fall tumbling down. With a telescopic range I was enabled to contemplate, and familiarize myself with, some of the worlds of your solar system: with worlds some of which are still more beautiful than this upon which I now stand, and whose inhabitants, as I have previously stated, have progressed to a degree of material refinement surpassing that of yourselves. Be ye not dismayed, however, at your inferiority; for a law of ceaseless progression exists, and will ever continue: therefore everything must, of necessity, progress to more exalted conditions; and this mundane world, influenced by the impetus indelibly impressed by the Great Evolver of all upon every vestige of creation, cannot avoid the alternative of inexorable progression, which will ultimately lead it from a state of darkness into one illumined by a beautiful light—the light of reason and intuition, by which Truth can be approached and embraced without hesitancy, without scruple, without fear — that ineffable light whose rays will reveal the direct and straight path by which can be obtained a deathless knowledge of immortal Truth, which in time will be conceived of and appreciated by mankind, all of whom have that eternal principle dwelling within them.

As I have before said, nothing is lost; for everything progresses to the ultimate for which it was primordially designed by the great Evolver and Author of all. The dog, the cat, the horse, which appear to you to have but an ephemeral existence, and to have been totally annihilated with the death of their physical bodies, rise into a higher physical state when the vital sparks have been extinguished in those bodies, and by a chain of ceaseless development they keep ascending as man does, for Nature is ever performing the sublime work allotted her—that of refining everything within her vast domains!

Digitized by Google

During my brief sojourn upon a circumscribed portion of this revolving orb there was nothing which contributed more to the charms of my existence than an attentive observation of the animal part of creation. To gratify my propensities in this matter I was wont to resort to the woods and forests around my home, and there, reclining under the shade of an outspreading tree, I luxuriated in the contemplation of the characteristics of what are termed dumb animals, the various notes and cries of whom were sweet music to mine ears—sweeter, indeed, than you can imagine. Their dissimilarity of habits, forms, dispositions and other peculiarities, arrested my attention, and I devoted much time to those features of the animal creation.

> With all thy bleak and wintry storms, oh ! earth,
> I love thee still, as the land of my birth ;
> And though I now midst fairer landscapes roam,
> My thoughts revert oft to my childhood's home.

Take away what you term the lower animals and what would be your world? It would be shorn of one of its greatest attractions ; for there is no man, be he the most cruel tyrant or the greatest miser, who has not had some gentle feeling kindled within him at the thought or presence of some member of one of the species of the animal tribes.

Man, the fruit of Nature's germ—matured by imperceptible degrees and during an inconceivable space of time—cannot dispense with the animal kingdom, the basis upon which he has been created, and as it was essential to his creation, so is its continuance absolutely necessary to his happiness and well-being.

To the higher spheres I go! Still onward and onward ; and when I reach that realm beyond, whereof I have spoken, I shall ne'er be enabled to return more. Even now 'tis with difficulty I do so in furtherance of the fulfilment of my promise, a promise, however, which will have been unsatis-

Digitized by Google

factorily performed. But regrets are useless. Ere long spiritual commune will be more facile, when better and more detailed descriptions will be given to earth's people by those who have passed to the silvery shores of Eternity. I must now bid you good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE XLIX.

DELIVERED 24TH SEPTEMBER, 1875.

GOOD EVENING. Once again I resume my subject, in which I will treat of scenes that I have not yet described to you.

The imagination of the traveller in a territory which is new to him is naturally heightened in regard to what will yet be revealed as he penetrates deeper into the unknown country. Even so with the spirits in their progress onward and upward: their imaginations are exercised in reference to the celestial shores which the impetus of Progress impels them to attain; but with this modification, however—that the imaginations of progressed spirits are not influenced by unhealthy excitement when contemplating the attainments of the future; for such imaginations are chastened by the constant yearnings and aspirations of minds ever fixed upon the divine Author of all.

The eastern portion, or what for the purpose of explanation to your minds we will term the eastern portion of the highest grade of the Sixth Sphere, is indescribably beautiful and magnificent, as well as exceedingly interesting on account of the display of artistic designs, and the undertakings of those who sojourn there. Every edifice there is built of gold—not the heavy, dense, gross metal of earth, but what may be termed its spiritual equivalent or correspondence, and which is in keeping with the pure, ethereal surroundings of this sphere. Like all other things of earth, the gold thereof may be said to be emblematic of the gold of the spheres, where it is of a nature infinitely more refined—an essential qualification in everything appertaining to the ethereal world.

Digitized by Google

The streets are paved with the same metal (I use the term "metal" for the purpose of affording you a vague idea of the scene): the reflected light from which (as, perhaps, you may imagine) is inexpressibly beautiful.

Traversing that portion of the world, I observed that the dresses of the spirits were of amber colour, which varied, or seemed to vary, to other colours as it passed through the different shades and lights of that grade. In view of those diversified or reflected colours such a scene might well be called "a grand transformation scene" — a scene truly magnificent to behold!

Here upon earth the so-called grandeur surrounding the butterfly portion of mankind—that portion which centres its aspirations upon externals alone—is too apt to engender in weak minds a feeling of envy, or of servile worship or adoration towards those who are decked in evanescent and borrowed plumes. Such questionable deference is not known in the grade of which I am now speaking. Such debasing feelings have long since become obsolete in spirits of that elevated standard. They know not that subservient awe — that humiliating sensation which some minds of earth are subject to when gazing on scenes of so-called grandeur or magnificence. Nor do they feel the influence of spirits above them in the same way as do spirits of the lower spheres. Such influences have given place to those which blend with the brighter scenes that surround them: they have been displaced by influences corresponding with all else there existing—by those lovely influences which impart to every spirit who is subject to them a radiant beauty indescribable.

Upon the summit of a glorious mound I observed a most majestic-looking building embellished with beautifully reflecting colours. It presented indications of having been erected at a very remote period, and there were marks about it which, to the spiritual vision, indicated that it was set apart for great

Digitized by Google

and important gatherings. I viewed it as a link between the present and very ancient times.

I stood upon the steps leading up to the precincts of this ancient structure. The steps were many—for the ascent was considerable—they were formed of the metal referred to, which is esteemed precious here upon earth, where it is so much sought and cherished, and the possession of which is too generally looked upon as the consummated state of felicity.

Imagine what would be the feelings of the avaricious were it possible for them to tread upon and behold that expansive flight of steps, formed of that which they undergo so much to acquire !—thinking that its acquisition will secure happiness—the blind pursuit of which eventuates in a deviation from the path that leads to true felicity.

Happiness is frequently spoken of, but little understood, for a very small per centage of humanity appears to know wherein true happiness doth consist. The greatest blessings are within, independent of any inordinate worldly possessions; for in the mind of man there lies the germ of real felicity—that germ which, duly fostered, will propagate inexhaustible and deathless delights. The body is made rich by the mind, and not the mind by the garb which covers it. A truly happy man must possess a sound mind, and such an one bears heaven about with him, and attracts to himself the admiration and love of all who are worthy of his consideration.

As I ascended those steps my thoughts reverted to those who, long before, had traversed them in their ascent to this building — to some of whom your histories make brief mention—to those benevolent and active beings who, in different ages of this world, have appeared and laboured with all the energies of their natures to eradicate existing abuses, and who have sought to guide mankind to better paths—to lead lives of virtue and rectitude: they, by the example of noble and well-spent lives, having devoted themselves to deeds

Digitized by Google

of mercy and charity, have thus represented in a marked manner the Divine Spark residing in every human being, obscured, perhaps, in some for a time, but destined eventually to blaze forth in splendour and glory.

Not alone did I ascend those golden steps which led to the great meeting place, for a dense throng of spirits, or souls encased in spirit forms, surrounded me in the ascent—spirits from spheres other than that of which I am now speaking. The serene demeanour of all bespoke the true joy—the genuine happiness, of which they were possessed. Not in any manner were they decorated by gorgeous clothing or meretricious display, but their dresses were in accordance with the simplicity of their minds, and were embellished by flowers arranged with perfect taste. A floral wreath crowned the brow of each of the very many spirits who flocked towards the summit of that broad avenue of steps, the fragrance of which perfumed the circumambient air, and infused such feelings in all who inhaled it as are indescribable by any language with which you are acquainted. With each member of that vast assemblage I enjoyed those inexplicable and delightful sensations engendered by pure friendship and perfect confidence. I felt at peace with all; the cankering worm of mistrust was dead; all withering blasts had for ever swept by; universal peace and love had eternally dawned upon my soul!

The last step of the golden avenue having been gained, what a sight to meet the gaze of the onlooker! Before me was a scene which seemed to verify the fabulous tales that are extant at this day among earth's inhabitants!—a scene that, were it possible to transport him thither, would dazzle the sight of a denizen of this physical world: opening his eyes upon that scene there would ensue immediate obscurity of the physical sight: it would become instantly blinded from the intensity of the sublime purity and splendour permeating all

Digitized by Google

around. The most eloquent of tongues—the most graphic of pens—could but give a feeble—a very feeble—description of the scenes as viewed from the summit of that broad and elevated flight of steps; and having so said, how useless for me to attempt a description, placed, as I am, under such disadvantages for giving verbal delineations!

Therefore I will, for the present, confine my observations to the interior of what I have, for lack of a more comprehensive term, designated as a building: passing beyond whose precincts we were admitted within the capacious entrance where we beheld what I may call a vast amphitheatre—so vast indeed that 'tis perfectly useless for me to essay to give you even an approximate measurement! An indistinct conception of its capacity may be gained when I affirm that the space within its enclosure could contain more than all the inhabitants of this globe of earth! Encompassing the mighty area were innumerable rows of seats, each elevated above the other; and a light of almost dazzling brightness shone o'er all. I beheld in the centre of this amphitheatre a vast platform upon which some performance was being enacted: a performance that vividly recalled earth-reminiscences to the recollections of many onlookers. Ships passing through wild and terrible storms . . . . . .

(Here the utterances of the Lecturer were either too rapid for the stenographic pen, or the gentleman who wielded it was too indisposed to transcribe the account of the scenic representation; but owing to whichever or whatever cause the vivid and glowing relation is transcriptively lost. I may here remark that many omissions have occurred in reporting the lectures, but this lecture has been more imperfectly rendered than those preceding it: not above one third of the utterances having been taken down. Certainly there were occasional sentences which flowed with too great rapidity to enable a short-hand writer to take them down with any degree of

Digitized by Google

accuracy; and for such manifestations of inability there is some excuse. Not so, however, where omissions caused by negligence are concerned: for such, in cases of the above-named nature, no valid excuse can be assigned. The time occupied in the delivery of a lecture varied from forty-five minutes to an hour and ten minutes; and as the words of each were, for the most part, spoken with a rapidity and volubility exceeding that of an ordinary or normal speaker, the reader can thus judge how far short the lectures must be of what was really uttered).

While strutting upon the platform of earth's theatre I, poor and imperfect player, cramped in my mentality and conceptions by the mortality and circumstances which imprisoned me, was oft captivated by the mimetic and other displays which I witnessed, ne'er conceiving that anything more grand, more beautiful, could be produced than the tawdry ostentation which had so charmed my inexperienced mind. How could I have then conceived of such glorious representations as I have just vainly attempted to describe, and which were beheld by millions of beings!

Oh! it was a scene upon which a laurelled poet might dwell with delight—a scene well adapted for displaying the beauties of a chaste, poetic mind—a scene doubling the pleasure of the beholders on their soul-exalting path!

There was nothing to detract from the charm of the scene—no symptoms of decay or old age—no failing or faltering voices, no uncouth language, no interruption, but all was beautiful and perfectly harmonial. All ideas were so intellectually expressed as to produce the most elevating effect upon the mind. So subtle, so wonderful is the reciprocity of feeling that, were it possible for any misconception of the utterances to occur, by projecting the thoughts towards the speaker, the misconstruction would be immediately dispelled and a correct interpretation received by the one who had misconstrued!

Digitized by Google

Passing, by spiritual power, to another part of the colossal structure I there beheld an assemblage of persons, or spirits, or beings (whichever term you please) of a magnitude about as great as that congregated in the amphitheatre I had just left. Associated together, slightly separated from the great assemblage, were many musicians, with instruments of melody of various descriptions, the sound of some of which instruments has not as yet been heard by mortal ears. Soft and sweet strains of music gently broke in upon the hitherto prevailing serene quietness. Music of the most gentle and soothing kind floated o'er the delicious air, when suddenly the vast hall seemed filled with one mighty volume of sounds harmonial! Strains of the most refined character and elegance greeted the sense of hearing of the immense concourse there of spirits, whose countenances beamed with the exquisite pleasure and happiness by which they were animated. Not only refinement and elegance characterized the dulcet strains, for the celestial band discoursed music of morality, referring to the moral government of the race in its rudimentary condition, where no element of wealth can be acquired equal to that of Truth, Love, Justice—the everlasting verities of the Great Author of all, and of the purified souls who are ever aspiring to be nearer to Him in goodness.

The music ceased, and from a platform raised at one end of the hall a spirit addressed us in a rapturous glow of eloquence—such eloquence as has ne'er been equalled by mortal lips. The speaker, who when on the mundane plane bore the name of Luther—Martin Luther, the Protester—urged upon us the necessity, the paramount necessity, of contributing all possible aid to the struggling reformers of earth in their noble efforts to light the lamps of their fellows, and to exhort them to attain and maintain freedom of soul—such freedom as is in accord with the truths of the spirit within them. He implored us to take advantage of the opportunities

Digitized by Google

now afforded of impressing upon mankind the importance of putting questions to Nature, and patiently awaiting her answers. Great blessings, he declared, are lying in her divine and exhaustless treasury—blessings for all who are worthy to receive them. He feelingly and eloquently dwelt upon the education of children (who should be well grounded in the truths and order of Nature), the universal brotherhood of the race, the philosophy of philanthropy, and the philosophy of life. Man, he maintained, should peruse diligently and reverently the open Volume of Nature, and, while discarding the errors of the past, prize and cherish its truths, replacing the old, unworthy ideas, by new germs of thought. The scroll of the mighty book of Nature, unbounded in extent, perpetual in duration, is ever open for the perusal of all, and no interpolations, no alterations, can be effected by fanaticism. Impervious, invulnerable, impregnable to all assaults, this great volume of divine truth is more truly reliable than any sacerdotal dictation, and upon its outspread, illimitable pages, are illustrations of grandeur and magnificence inexpressible, incomparable, and imperishable.

(Here the shorthand writer failed to take down some allusions to the lower spiritual sphere, the only reference, as reported, being the words which conclude this very imperfectly-rendered lecture).

Intense, all-absorbing earnestness, characterised the long-continued address of the speaker, and it culminated when he referred to the darkest of the spiritual spheres : those spheres which will, with other now existing conditions of human life, be one day a thing of the past—when, is more than I can say; but that such will be the case is as certain as that I am now speaking through this Medium to you, for progress demands that it shall be so. Good night.

Digitized by Google

LECTURE L.

DELIVERED 26TH SEPTEMBER, 1875.

GOOD EVENING. The elements,* apparently, have been striving in their relentless fury to destroy the influences with which we have tried to surround the Medium; but at length our efforts and perseverance have been successful: we have overcome all difficulties, and our mouth-piece is now entirely under our control and in great power to-night.

This night is the ultimate of my spirit-mission to earth —that mission, the thoughts of which stirred within my soul feelings of ecstatic pleasure when first I ascertained it possible that communion could be held with the people of earth.

From my celestial abode I witnessed the fearful conflict and turmoil of your earthly elements; and the terrible strife appeared inimical to the delivery of this, my last address to you; but, closely observing the elemental contentions, I saw with transports of joy the flaming electricity open a path for my spiritual form to pass; and, with the advent of a thought, I left once again my exalted home and returned to this physical sphere.

Fearful that alone I should be unable to fulfil my task, I have enlisted the sympathies of six other spiritual beings, who will, if necessary, aid me in its accomplishment. Those living sympathisers are beside my instrument whilst I now play

* Vivid lightning and loud thunder claps occurred before the entrancement this evening, and a difficulty appeared to have been encountered in entrancing. -ED.

Digitized by Google

upon the notes; and, although unseen by yourselves, they are enabled by the strong influence of magnetism emanating from the circle and surrounding them, to look upon those placid and smiling faces which, alas! will ere long be moistened with the sorrowful tears of parting.*

This is the last time of my traversing those magnetic paths which have led me to this circle where sweet influences have blended so pleasantly with mine own feelings, enabling me to pass so many hours of loving intercourse.

To-night may be a tedious one to some of the sitters, as well as trying to the Medium, to whom I am so much indebted; but you all will, I doubt not, bear with me to the end. I am encouraged to hope this from your hitherto patient and earnest demeanour.

This will be a night which you will recollect when I am far away, experiencing new sensations while treading the path of progress—that path, every step along which makes us more worthy to be called children of the all-loving beneficent Father. Let this night be as a refreshing draught to you, strengthening all your powers and faculties, so that, whenever your thoughts revert to it, you may feel revived, and be borne swiftly onwards by the wings of hope.

---

* The speaker was correct: his words were verified, for tears flowed freely from the eyes of more than one of the circle ere he had concluded his address. But one of the first questions, probably, of the reader on terminating the perusal of the lecture will be: "Where are the passages which drew the tears mentioned?"—a question I cannot but deem pertinent.

My response, briefly, is this: The foregoing lecture (as does each of those which precede it) presents but a poor criterion of the true value of the original: it affords no conception of the purity and solemnity of manner with which it was delivered—a manner which I cannot adequately explain otherwise than by saying, *that it was characterised by a supernal atmosphere!*—an atmosphere I had often heard of: but, until recently, had never conceived it possible for a human being to be surrounded by it.—Ed.

Digitized by Google

Remember that, though in future I may not be in your midst and directly feel your kindly influences, I shall hear constantly of you, for other ethereal beings will ever be mingling with you, blending their spiritual lives with your physical existences—though those dark vapours which, like those of this night, may spontaneously pour forth the thunders and lightnings, terrifying and illuminating, yet a path will be found by the loving ones—a path that will lead them to your circles, and from them I shall glean intelligence of those who now listen to me.

(Here an omission occurs—an omission which makes the next recorded sentence to appear rather abrupt.)

I thank Thee, Father, for Thy great kindness, the memory of which sinks into my spiritual soul, vibrating through every portion, and stimulating it, when an apprehension would arise that it is forgotten, to remember that Thou art ever present. There have been brief moments when I have carried in my soul a heavy burden, which, however, has been removed by the refreshing influence of Thy immeasurable love.

One more feeble description will conclude the series of lax definitions I have essayed to give you—how feeble, how lax, too well I know ; for the recollection that they have been so will cause the only regret I shall feel when thinking of our many meetings.

I will now briefly allude to the scenes appertaining to the south of the sphere termed the sixth. In attempting to delineate the scenery of the eastern portion I am fully sensible of the fact that the ideas conveyed to your minds of the beautiful colour and radiant lights which there abound must fall immeasurably short of the wondrous reality. And having of necessity come to such conclusion of what use is it to say that the scenery on the side to which I now draw your attention is more glorious, more brilliant, more magnificent still !

Digitized by Google

To mankind there has ever been an impenetrable mystery surrounding the beings of the (to them) invisible realms of spiritual existence—to their minds that existence has ever been enshrouded by a mystic haze of doubt. But we, whose spirits are freed from the corporeity of the rudimentary life, have dispelled the doubts, have solved the problems, have penetrated to where the thoughts of man on the physical plane have never reached. We have searched so deeply into the laws which surround our spiritual forms that we can fully understand the influences proceeding from them—those influences which cause us to beam forth with a radiant glory, superior even to that of the enchanting scenery we behold.

For a moment I call your attention to the southern side of this sphere. Behold a city whose houses are of silver and linked together by rubies, both of which are infinitely finer than those of earth, and whose brilliancy surpasses everything you can possibly conceive. There is a soul-power there which moves atoms, and causes their association with those of like affinity—a power which seems to speak in a language of inexpressible beauty, taste, and elegance. This statement may be demurred to by some who deign to read so far, but it will be by those only whose conceptions fail to understand the refined and potent nature of the existence as exemplified in that exalted sphere—by those only whose capacities to receive and perceive truth are as yet of a very limited order.

A silvery hue of incandescent brightness pervades every portion of this grade; for the rays of the orbs, whose light shines upon it, diffuse throughout the same lucid illumination.

The perfect adaptation, harmony, and correspondence of all things there existing, kindle within the souls of all who behold the wondrous display an intellectual flame of adoration for that eternal Power whose wisdom and goodness are so manifest, and not only wisdom and goodness are manifestations of that eternal and beneficent Power, for the divine

Digitized by Google

attributes of love, truth, justice, mercy, are plainly perceivable as indestructible emanations therefrom. Contemplating the manifestations of those perfect attributes the mind of the spirit is indelibly impressed—it has become subdued, grateful, reverent, and it perceives the grand and glorious destiny in reserve for all sentient beings—eternal and ever increasing happiness.

Enjoying such conceptions of the Mighty Designer and Ruler of the unimaginable Universe — as do the happy denizens of that advanced grade—need I say that their worship is pure and simple?—that it is free from any tincture of what is here termed doctrinal or dogmatical authority? To say so seems almost an insult to common sense. I saw, 'tis true, various temples of magnificent structure in many parts of that grade; but these are not used for the purposes with which the inhabitants of earth are familiar. They stand there as merely symbolical of the folly indulged by the people of the rudimentary sphere: they are viewed solely as symbols of the degrading and derogatory religious conceptions cherished by mankind through so many ages—of conceptions which were regarded, however, by those who honoured them as immaculate and stereotyped, and to be perpetuated for ever and ever. Those representations of religious misconceptions are destined to remain there; and as each age has its representative temple with the necessary inscription, all beholders and inspectors of those monuments of ignorance and superstition are enabled at a glance to review the theological history of the past—to mentally tread the serpentine pathway marked out by a designing sacerdotal order.

All with whom I came in contact were adorned by beautifully sublime and elevated minds; and the gorgeous brilliancy of those realms of light seemed but the reflection of the exalted beings who beheld it The more gentle, amiable, and loving the spirit becomes the more fragrant the air, the purer the beams,

Digitized by Google

and the more beautiful are the influences which surround it; and as gentleness, amiability, and love are pre-eminent qualities of that grade, the necessary concomitants of fragrant air, pure and brilliant beams and lovely influences do there abound.

I will now as briefly advert to the northern portion: the west—the place of my abode—I will refer to lastly. As the ideas of mankind on such a subject as size (when exceeding anything his physical sight can scan) are necessarily of an indefinite character, it will be useless for me to attempt to define the measurement of the world of beings to whom I now refer. It will suffice to say that *that* grade occupies space far greater than that occupied by this whirling globe called "Earth." Such a summary statement will afford you a vague estimate of the dimensions of that portion of the Sixth Sphere which, for the sake of classification, I term the Northern. In gazing upon that world of spirits I could not avoid thinking of the myriads of souls that have passed away from the earth-sphere, of all the numberless generations that have existed, and whose physical bodies are now mingling with the elements from which they were gradually derived. Of those myriads, how many were there, thought I, who had entertained any idea of the perpetual progress which they were destined to make towards the perfection of their nature! How many of those myriads were there who had cherished the pleasing consideration that the human soul is designed to progress from the lowest to the highest and most sublime state—to gradually acquire accessions of virtue and glory with which it will shine for ever! Until they began to realize* it few, very few, indeed, ever conceived of such a sublime, beneficent, and progressive process—a process which unfolds such great consolation, the thoughts of which should rebuke every unjust and

* That is, when they had passed from the earth-sphere. —Ed.

Digitized by Google

unworthy act, and encompass mankind in an atmosphere of celestial peace.

*That world is the recipient not only of beings from this globe upon which you are sojourning, but of souls from hundreds of orbs or worlds beyond. It gathers in its harvest of unnumbered millions of families from other revolving globes of like nature to this upon which I now stand, and although there are numberless souls flocking to it in the short space of what is termed by you a day, yet it will never be possible to crowd it! Measure then, if you can, the capacity of such a mighty world! 'Tis impossible! for it is measureless to the finite, human mind!

I have used the term families for the purpose of conveying to your minds the unity existing, but in so speaking I do not mean families of consanguinity (or what you designate as such), but families of affinity, families whose members are lovingly and harmoniously related, and whose minds glow with pre-eminent love and wisdom.†

Passing away westward another change of scene greeted my visional powers. The scenery became more grand and magnificent, and it ever enjoyed a perfect freedom from sombre clouds and the murky shades of night.

> For there all is lovely, bright and gay—
> Smiling in the eternal day.

I found there were two distinct entrances to this grade—the one by which I was brought in and the other. . . .‡

*Between this and the preceding paragraph occurs another omission, the reporter having failed to record the opening allusion to the world of spirits as a whole. This allusion, as the reader will perceive, is a digression, but such digressions are frequent throughout the series of lectures. Ed.

†These "families of affinity," "families lovingly and harmoniously related, &c.," refer to spirits above a certain sphere or grade.—Ed.

‡Here another break in the discourse occurs, but as this and other portions were uttered with remarkable rapidity it is not surprising that omissions here and there stud the pages of this lecture.—Ed.

Digitized by Google

One of the first sights to attract my attention was what I can describe as naught else than a labyrinth of bridges, which appeared to be supported upon marble pillars of the most beautiful designs. Each bridge formed a vast and magnificent arch that stretched across the mighty expanse of the ethereal space, while far away in the distance were to be seen hills and dales far more beautiful than can be imagined by the human mind. The hills, instead of being, as are those of this globe, rough and jagged in their contour, and resting on solid foundations of granite or rock, appeared to possess outlines of the most pleasing character, formed with the utmost precision and rendered inexpressibly beautiful by the glitter of all kinds of precious stones, and though lustrous and transparent, they were perfectly solid and substantial.

The manifold scenes of unutterable loveliness caused a throbbing of delight in the soul, and that delight was enhanced by the consciousness of being everlastingly associated with those whom love, harmony, and affinity, had coalesced as one affectionate family. There the celestial and dominant power of affinity became supreme, and with its laws I soon made myself familiar.

(Here the speaker intimated that the discourse would, with every probability, extend to an unusual length; and if any member of the circle felt disinclined to remain until its termination, no obstacle would be interposed to prevent a withdrawal. The intimation may have been intended for two juvenile auditors who were present; one of whom was a member of the family, and the other a sister to Mrs. Harris. For whomsoever it may have been intended, the hint manifested feelings of consideration on the part of the speaker, whose discourse extended to a space of time exceeding an hour and twenty minutes.)

That wonderful psychological power of which I have before spoken—that soul-force which is capable of bringing a friend

Digitized by Google

to one's side simply by expressing an earnest wish for his presence—I there saw in frequent requisition. That grand influence, however, cannot be exercised beyond the circle of affinity which surrounds those who enjoy it.

Standing upon the summit of one of those lovely hills I have cursorily mentioned, surveying with rapturous pleasure and delight the marvellous contexture of that celestial grade, I felt a strange influence come o'er me—an influence I ne'er before had experienced; and I rapidly descended towards one of those lovely scenes which (but in a more crude state) had such fascination for me while sojourning upon this physical sphere. Meandering down from heights past description—not in wild and raging cataracts, but stealing down in placid quietness—I saw a stream of limpid beauty which, as it sparkled in its transparent brightness, filled my soul with a burning desire to sip of its pellucid waters. I drank from the limpid stream, the desire of my soul was satisfied, and immediately a strength and power beyond expression were infused into my being, and an inclination came o'er me to follow the stream; and follow it I did as, in its flexuous passage, it flowed o'er golden sands and gems of multitudinous kinds, which glistened with shining lustre in the glorious light of celestial and eternal day.

Here and there upon its banks I saw buildings of diversified orders of architecture, similar in degree to the multiplicity of styles which are to be seen scattered o'er the surface of your earth, but far excelling them in beauty of design and finish. Each home was embellished by a floral display in consonance with the tastes or desires of its occupants; and all around these lovely dwellings Nature had cast her most gorgeous robes.

The strange influence which led me to set out on my ramble down the stream increased in intensity as the stream expanded till it eventually flowed into a capacious lake, the

Digitized by Google

beauty of which imparted an additional charm to the lovely scene. I was escorted round the enchanting banks of this lake, and my attention was arrested by houses, mansions, villas, palaces, of the most elaborate designs, of the most chaste styles of architecture, and constructed with multitudinous gems or jewels akin to those which glittered around the hills to which I have alluded.

The meandrous and gentle stream seemed only to have allured me to follow its course in order that I might reach the home that here was destined for me, and it appeared to have fondly led me through those pleasurable scenes as a preparation for the still more pleasurable that were in store for me. . . . . .*

On approaching that happy spot I was met by friends of many generations past, some of whom, alas! had, I was told, during their earthly existence, acquired unenviable celebrity and worn crowning wreaths for tearing and burning human forms—those forms with whose spirits they now associated! By those friends I was received with such a welcome as is accorded to all who enter there—a welcome characterised by pure affection, truth, and love—by such affection, truth, and love, as are unknown to beings whose spiritual natures are undeveloped. I was fondly led to the habitation that was to be my home.

(The description of that "home" has not been recorded, for the lightning-like rapidity with which it was given baffled the dexterity of the stenographer. Indeed, throughout the whole of this lecture the words were spoken through the Medium with remarkable celerity—with a celerity which I never knew to be equalled by any other speaker, and notwithstanding the rapidity of utterance the enunciation was marked by an impressive and solemn inspiration, as though every word

* Again an omission.—Ed.

Digitized by Google

proceeded from the inmost recesses of his soul. And not only to this particular lecture does the remark pertaining to the enunciation apply, but to every one of the series is it applicable).

Formed of the same electric-purity are the incalculable homes of the felicitous beings who share with me that grade of resplendent glory, and brilliant lights of various colours incessantly scintillate therefrom, causing the ethereal atmosphere to be all aglow with the glorious rays. Each home is embellished by florulent productions—by such fair flowers as delight the tastes of its occupants, and all are furnished as naturally as are the houses upon the planet to which you are subject. Instruments of music of great variety are there to be seen, for instrumental and vocal harmony of sounds are there brought to such a state as to be utterly beyond the conception of the mind confined by physical matter. (More sentences here wanting).

And now, dear friends, with such celestial surroundings as I have feebly—oh! how feebly—described, with my dear wife and children, whose angelic countenances and sweet companionship I am ever to look upon and enjoy: with those children who have attained to the summit of spiritual stature and beauty: with that wife ever smiling upon me: with the softest zephyrs ever gently fanning me: with fountains ever pouring forth waters of the most fragrant odour: with Nature ever dressed in her most magnificent robes. With these blessings, and many more everlastingly to accompany me (to recount which time and words would fail) think ye that it is possible for other than happiness to be my portion?

Thus, dear friends, I conclude my imperfect and inefficient descriptions. The keenest and only regrets I shall bear away with me will pertain to such imperfection and inefficiency; for I have failed to trace the paths through the many grades and spheres of the mighty world of which I am a denizen in

Digitized by Google

the clear and concise manner I could have desired. But you may rest assured that no descriptions—be they ever so clear, concise, and eloquent—can ever succeed in portraying to the minds of mankind more than a feeble estimate of the wondrous scenes pervading the more elevated spheres of what is known to you as the "Spiritual World." Human ideas in this, your sphere of being, are necessarily limited and of an indefinite character: and if it were possible for language to do justice to those marvellous scenes, it would be impossible that human ideas, limited and indefinite as they are, could grasp the true conceptions of THE GRAND REALITY! Any descriptions, therefore, that may be given of "the world beyond the grave" (to use a stereotyped phrase of a section of earth's people), will (in view of the present limited range of human conceptions) be ever meagre and unworthy of the mighty subject.

(Again I have to note the omissions of some few passages, adverting to "the wild and uncouth swamps and dreary scenes" of the lower spheres, with their correspondingly dark inhabitants.)

Those perverted natures—those enfranchised spirits—have to set about eradicating the evil effects of that cankering system of society which has so debased them. They soon perceive that *that* eradication is only to be effected by patient and long-sustained efforts. They perceive that sin carries with it its own punishment, and that they are their own accusers, their own judges. The flimsy veil has been rent: the unholy life has been laid bare, and the poor sinful spirit's state is perceived by all who gaze upon it. To such darkened souls bright and brilliant spirits descend and unveil the beauties of that progressive path which is open for all to traverse. Through their angelic teachings, lovingly, earnestly, and persistently continued, the unhappy and suffering souls are stimulated to repentance and amendment; and, finally, the dross of earth becomes purged and the spiritual natures refined

Digitized by Google

and sublimated, when that wondrous law known to you as Progress impels them forward and upward along those bright paths of occupation which are interminable, and every step upon which reveals scenes more and more wondrously beautiful and leads to a more exalted plane of existence—to higher realms of love and beauty.

With such scenes, then, my friends, before your mental vision, be obedient to that Voice. The Voice of God, which is implanted within the soul of every one. Allow it to be your Guide in the path of duty, and diligently observe the mutations (if any there be) in your moral consciousness, seeking out the causes by which those mutations are produced; and you will gradually discover that *that* light which is now dawning upon the race of earth will eventually reveal to you rays of such transcendent lustre, and spiritual truths of such import, as were never before revealed to man.

It is not meet that you should wear the crown before you have earned it. You will wear the laurels of spiritual life when you have deserved them. Truth and love, purity and sincerity, bring their own reward—a reward that elevates their possessor to a plane of celestial bliss. Therefore eradicate false pride and all such evil influences from your souls. Anticipate and try to realise the conditions appertaining to the higher life. Appear there with souls unspotted (for it is possible to do so) and thereby obtain, on your advent to that life, such an exalted state as will qualify you to become spirits of light to those who are enshrouded by darkness.

I fervently hope and trust that you may be better fitted to enter upon that life than was the being who now addresses you, for he was not, on his departure from earth, adorned with that light and purity which entitle their possessor to claim association with the pure and good; but as you will remember, if your thoughts revert to the opening series of my discourses—the impetus given him by his virtues was so feeble as

Digitized by Google

to carry him no higher than the grade spoken of—a grade dark and gloomy, filled with spirits undeveloped and unhappy. It is my most earnest wish that you qualify yourselves upon this mundane plane for a glorious advent to an elevated spiritual one—that you may reach such a sphere in the ethereal and immortal existence as will enable you immediately to join the mighty band of the pure and good spirits who are ever striving to elevate the gloomy and desponding.

Sincerely, ardently I pray that all may, upon this earth-plane of ephemeral existence, attain to the highest possible conceptions of truth—adhering to that, and doing to your fellows as you would desire that they should do unto you, if so, you will assuredly inherit, when you have bidden adieu to this earth-life, a bright and glorious mansion in that existence where every soul is destined, sooner or later, to attain to immaculate purity and love.

And ere I say farewell allow me to once again implore you to walk in the path leading to truth, both boldly and plainly. You are not placed here for any great length of time: your sojourn in this existence is brief—brief, indeed, compared to eternity! Some there are among you who, perhaps, are upon the eve of joining us in those realms of light,* the thought of which, instead of being one of sadness, should engender the consoling reflection that there are awaiting you there homes of everlasting purity and peace. Think of this as a refreshing stream which will pour its glad waters o'er your thirsty souls. Drink of that stream whene'er your souls are depressed, and your faith in a radiant and glorious immortality will be renewed. Reverently heed and follow the dictates of the

*Two of the members of the circle, Mr. Devlin and Mrs. Grace, passed on to the higher life in a comparatively short time after this was uttered.—Ed.

Digitized by Google

Deity within you: lift yourselves up to that boundless Being and His Laws: strive to conquer the animal passions of your natures, and woo and cherish those chaste and spiritual influences which will lead you to higher domains of light and love. Look to the glorious laws which surround and control your natures: prayerfully, reverently study them, and seek to know what to you is mysterious in them: your search and study, duly persevered in, will be amply rewarded.

Those who are resolved, while diligent in the performance of their duties, to be contented with whatever lot befalls them during their earthly career, are avoiding that embittered state which seizes upon discontented natures, and are here planting germs in the spirit which will attain to full development in the Spiritual World. I do not implore you in any way, savouring of sacerdotalism, to feign religion: no, no! recoil from the manifestations of such "religion," for they are unworthy, unbecoming, and degrading to rational and intellectual beings.

True religion is simple—very simple; and its crowning glory consists in behaving towards others as you would wish that they should behave towards yourselves. The only priest of true religion apart from yourselves is Science, which unfolds to your gaze the Divine Revelations of Nature—those Revelations Divine which are destined to supersede the superstitious beliefs of mankind, and the spurious revelations and religions of the world for which divine authority is falsely claimed by priestcraft. You have no need to believe in this or that dogma, creed, or doctrine; but believe implicitly in the immortality of the soul and in the aphorism and the momentous truth: that, "as you sow so shall you reap;" for if you sow that which is bad or cultivate that which is evil, so surely and justly will you reap in accordance with the seed you have disseminated, in obedience to the inexorable and deathless law of effect following cause.

Digitized by Google

Within each one of you lies the germ of all imaginable spiritual beauty; cultivate that germ: encourage its growth, and then you will be enabled to realize the pleasing significance of Immortality—that mighty Principle which insures the exemption of the Divine Spark from being extinguished, and which preserves individual identity everlastingly.

Let us here briefly glance at the philosophy which is now o'erspreading the earth. Take a retrospective view of the recorded history of the race of mankind, and what do you perceive?—that every great truth, ere it has been embraced, has met with opposition! Then despair not at the present reception accorded to this belief, or more properly knowledge, of what is termed Spiritualism, by the disciples of ignorance, bigotry, prejudice, dogmas, doctrines and creeds; for Truth—the embodiment of Divine Thought—is indestructible—eternal; and, being so, no opposition can affect it: opposition may retard its being universally embraced; but for a time only, for Truth—stronger, mightier than all else, and possessed of deathless vitality, must ultimately be acknowledged and sought after.

I look upon Spiritualism as a means of enriching the mind, and as a source of consolation above aught else to the sad and weary sinner. Notwithstanding the obloquy and ridicule hurled at it by thoughtless and designing men, the truth of spirit communion has been embraced by some of the brightest intellects and most philosophic minds of the day, and will continue to be so in an increased ratio. It is as a tree whose branches are expanding in an unprecedented manner, and whose growth not very long since was of a very dwarfish character.

The spiritual philosophy is certain eventually to o'erspread all the earth, and to appeal to, and be embraced by, every human soul upon it. Its facts will ere long be irresistible: they will (and not in vain) appeal to the most bigoted, the most prejudiced, the most ignorant, the most sensuous.

Digitized by Google

This now despised philosophy will reveal to the race of mankind a true conception of psychology and theology—not the pseudo "theology" of the church frequenters; but the transcendental theology of Truth.

Spiritualism bridges over the grave, and connects the lowest and most despised of earth's people with the most exalted souls of the spirit-land. The spiritual movement is not confined solely to a belief in the intercourse of the two worlds. That belief is the basis of higher aims—higher motives: such belief must eventuate in the acceptation of those concomitants which are inseparable from it.

Spiritualism will clear away the mists from the soul: it will annihilate the idolatry of the nations, and substitute a religion more worthy the acceptance of rational creatures: a religion so true, so glorious, that every sentient being of earth will worship at its shrine. It will encircle in its golden lustre the ignorant and the educated, the poor and the rich, the wicked and the good. It will reflect such a brilliant stream of light that they who now disbelieve, oppose, and ridicule it, will yet rejoice that it is true.

I am very thankful to you all for the punctuality in attendance at the many sessions held in this apartment. You have my most sincere wishes for your welfare and happiness. Within you there are thoughts which should be the means of brightening the way for many weary travellers.

To you* I present my thanks for having attended to the work which you so readily undertook. Your labour has not been light, for, on account of causes which I have endeavoured to explain, my discourses have not been so lucid or connected in their nature as I could have wished. Continue, I pray you,

---

* Mr. Devlin, who made a second copy of the transcript of these lectures, with emendations in accordance with explanatory notes received through the Medium.—Ed.

Digitized by Google

in your self-imposed task, for the completion of which you will be amply rewarded hereafter.

You, dear lady,* I thank for that kindness which at the present moment I cannot express in words. But though I cannot do so, believe me I shall remember that kindness, as well as the source from whence it emanated. Although I am now about to leave you, forget not that the parting is but for a brief space of time. We will meet again under different circumstances and brighter skies, and in the interval I shall cherish the keenest interest for you. Oh! may you succeed in securing in this life that rest and happiness which you deserve.

Doubt not, oh! tried friend† of the Medium, that we shall meet again: rest content that we shall, and under equal conditions, for then we shall behold each other. Think of me in the grooves and channels of your daily life, and in the depths of your sufferings and sorrows. I have to thank you for tending upon the Medium with such solicitude, and with you are associated some of the richest memories of this my now completed mission to earth.

Ah! and you my young friend‡ I shall never again hover o'er your earthly form. I ask you to think of me as I think of you—with love and kindness. You are a Medium of rare power, but for a time it is better that that power should lie dormant in you. When the time arrives for the resumption§ of its development cultivate it as a God-given power. Allow not pride or any selfish influx to influence you. In exercising your medial powers ne'er trifle with the influences surrounding

---

* Mrs. Browne. † Mrs. Harris.

‡ One of the children of the Editor, who used frequently to see the Lecturer and describe his appearance, and who is now the wife of the Chief Secretary of this colony.

§ I had been advised by her invisible friends to refrain for a time from cultivating her medial gifts.—Ed.

Digitized by Google

you, and ne'er turn the richest gem of Nature's gifts to a purpose unworthy thereof.

And you,* oh! generous and devoted friend, my feelings concerning you cannot be expressed by earthly words, 'tis useless for me to attempt it. I have various things to thank you for, notably for the opportunity you have afforded me of pouring forth the verbal streams that have issued from the lips of the Medium; and, scarcely less memorably, for the exceeding kindness you have shown towards him—kindness manifested in such a loving, practical manner, that it must be forever engraven upon the tablets of his memory. Accept my thanks—thanks free from earthly alloy—pure, unsophisticated thanks. Your loving acts will never be forgotten. Though I ne'er do return I shall frequently hear of you amidst those scenes which I have vainly endeavoured to picture to you. Absent in spirit and in soul I shall ever think of you. I shall be constantly hovering o'er you in my mind.

Words cannot express to you, lady,† the sensations which vibrate through my spiritual form. I thank you for your patient attention at our sittings. Remember that life on earth is but ephemeral, and that death (or what is designated as such) is but the avenue which leads to the real and more perfect existence. Though your path here, short as it is, may be at times clouded, yet believe—inflexibly believe—that with integrity of soul and obedience to the voice of God within you, joy and gladness will crown your spiritual existence. Oh! may you, during your brief sojourn upon this earthly sphere, ever realize the blessing that there are beings who have preceded you to that existence always hovering near you, and waiting in patient hope to receive you when the doors of Nature are opened for your admission to a higher state of being.

* The Editor. † Mrs. Grace.

Digitized by Google

(Here should follow the address to the shorthand writer, but that gentleman has omitted to report it).

There is yet one* whose vitality and perseverance I have not forgotten; and to whom, I pray you, convey my thanks for the punctuality displayed in attending our sessions. For his kindness to the Medium when at times he has been lonely, sad, and distressed: as well as for his attention to that poor sufferer† who is yet prostrated: he needs no verbal thanks; for well he knows that for those acts of unostentatious kindness he will be amply rewarded in those realms of light and love where deeds of love, of mercy, of charity, are cherished as the best delights. As surely as the mind doth create its own heaven, so surely doth the conscience—that sleepless monitor—approve or condemn the acts of its possessor; and, doubt not, an approving conscience is enjoyed by our absent and kind friend.

I have never yet asked of you‡ a favour, for I have had no need to do so; but now, at the moment of saying farewell, I advance a request, feeling assured that it will be met in a spirit corresponding to that which prompts it: it is to continue your kindness towards this Medium. Ah! look to him, I beseech you, Sir; for I love him, and am grateful to him for the opportunity he has afforded me of giving utterance to some of the sentiments of my soul: sentiments, alas! crudely and imperfectly uttered; but I ask you to remember that the mind of this Medium is uncultivated, and totally ignorant of the use of language which is classed as chaste and elegant; and, therefore, if the speech which I have caused him to pronounce has been at times uncouth, harsh, or dissonant, I pray you to think leniently of it.

---

* Mr. Moorfield, whom circumstances prevented being present.

† A young person whom Mr. M. had been daily magnetising.

‡ The Editor.

Digitized by Google

During many of your years I had long lingered around the human brain in quest of that through which I might be enabled to perform what now I am about completing. My search was not successful until our mutual friend, Spirit Robinson, introduced me to this organism, whose mind is deficient even of a rudimental knowledge of that which is known to you as education; and—as I have before remarked—the sole regrets that will accompany me when I have bidden you adieu will pertain to the incomplete, inefficient, and inelegant utterances which have characterized the series of discourses of which this is the conclusion. In those discourses I have not presented to you a thousandth part of what I was desirous of accomplishing. I have given you merely a brief sketch or disconnected outline of some of the various phases of spiritual life; and the difficulties attendant upon the presentation of that sketch or outline—destitute even as it is of so much that would impart more value to it—you can never properly realize until you become as myself, and essay to play upon the instrument of another's mentality. All the difficulties, however, which I have encountered in the delivery of these semi-perspicuous lectures or discourses have only added zest to the pleasure I have experienced throughout the protracted period of my addresses: that pleasure has stimulated me to take advantage of every opportunity that would aid me in the accomplishment of my purpose.

Doubtless there have been times when I have, perforce, appeared languid and weak in spirit-power; but it has been apparent merely, and must be ascribed to the laxity of the instrument which I had in hand. Languor or weakness ne'er comes o'er the spirit who has undertaken such a task as that which I have been so desirous of accomplishing. And in effecting it I have ever had the object in view of enabling you, my kind friends, to glean some small conception of the soul-elevating scenes of spiritual life

Digitized by Google

Yes, I have been animated by an intense desire to impart to you, in your own language, an outline of some of the scenes which you are yet to look upon and enjoy, and in my attempts to gratify that desire I may have been betrayed into repetitions, inconsistencies, and a lack of consecutiveness and sequence which, under more favourable auspices, would not have happened. But I have succeeded as well as I had any reason to anticipate considering the state or condition of the Medium to whom I am so much indebted.

The spirit known to you as "Time" will succeed me in the control of this Medium, through whose organism he will deliver to you discourses upon subjects about which I have instructed him. If at times you find him rather ungrammatical or inelegant in language you will, I doubt not, look upon those faults as you did the same in myself. Time is a spirit whose love of doing good I am well aware of, and though at the outset his speaking powers may be hindered by the earthly organization of the Medium and may be even inferior to my own, yet in the end, if the health of this subject continue good, they will, I feel assured, excel them.

And now, alas! good bye. Fond hearts ne'er forget me. Kind souls I will ne'er forget you. I shall meet you at some future day in those lovely floral scenes of supernal beauty to which I now go.

And now, oh! merciful and beneficent Being, once again and for the last time through the human organism, I briefly address Thee. Thou knowest my heart, my mind, my soul, and with what feelings of gratitude I think of those cleansing laws by which I have wiped away those vile earthly passions which disgraced my soul. Upon Thy soft bosom I lie as a child upon its mother's breast. By Thy sanction I am enabled to look over immeasurable space; and—oh! wonderful, glorious sight!—I am permitted by Thee to behold those who, ere they passed through the gate of death, were wrinkled,

Digitized by Google

jaded, and depressed, but who are now floating through Thy ethereal, illimitable spheres, in youthfulness and grace—a sight that, in the past, has reanimated my being and turned my weakness into strength. Help Thy children on earth, oh! Father, to conquer the evil dispositions of their animal natures, and to cultivate their higher spiritual or divine natures, so as to become nearer to Thee in goodness and in truth. Teach them to acquire a knowledge of the depth and beauty of Thy love—that love which sheds its soft impressions upon the most hardened wretch or the darkest criminal.

The moment has come. I thank Thee, Oh! Deity — fervently, gratefully thank Thee.

Receive me, thou glorious spirits, and accompany me to that Celestial Land where our souls will find the rest and peace which await them.

" Can such things be, and overcome us like a
Summer's cloud, without our special wonder?"

" A truth so strange, 'twere bold to think it true,
If not far bolder still to disbelieve."

" Awake, Oh, man! the morning light
Is dawning on thy mental night."

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

ADDENDA.

TESTIMONY TO PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

THE following is a list of eminent persons who, after personal investigation, have satisfied themselves of the reality of some of the phenomena generally known as Psychical or Spiritualistic.

N.B.—An asterisk is prefixed to those who have exchanged belief for knowledge.

SCIENCE.—The Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, F.R.S., President R.A.S.; W. Crookes, Fellow and Gold Medallist of the Royal Society; C. Varley, F.R.S., C.E.; A. R. Wallace, the eminent Naturalist; W. F. Barrett, F.R.S.E., Professor of Physics in the Royal College of Science, Dublin; Dr. Lockhart Robertson; *Dr. J. Elliotson, F.R.S., some time President of the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society of London; *Professor de Morgan, some time President of the Mathematical Society of London; *Dr. Wm. Gregory, F.R.S.E., some time Professor of Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh; *Dr. Ashburner *Mr. Rutter; *Dr. Herbert Mayo, F.R.S., &c., &c.

*Professor F. Zöllner, of Leipzig, author of *Transcendental Physics*, &c.; Professors G. T. Fechner, Scheibner, and J. H. Fichte, of Leipzig; Professor W. E. Weber, of Göttingen; Professor Hoffman, of Würzburg; *Professor Perty, of Berne; Professors Wagner and *Butlerof, of Petersburg; *Professors Hare and Mapes, of U.S.A.; Dr. Robert Friese, of Breslau; M. Camille Flammarion, Astronomer, &c., &c.

LITERATURE.—The Earl of Dunraven; T. A. Trollope; S. C. Hall; Gerald Massey; Sir R. Burton; *Professor Cassal, LL.D.? *Lord Brougham; *Lord Lytton; *Lord Lyndhurst; *Archbishop Whately; *Dr. R. Chambers, F.R.S.E.; *W. M. Thackeray; *Nassau Senior; *George Thompson; *W. Howitt; *Serjeant Cox; *Mrs. Browning; Hon. Roden Noel, &c., &c.

Bishop Clarke, Rhode Island, U.S.A.; Darius Lyman, U.S.A.; *Professor W. Denton; Professor Alex. Wilder; Professor Hiram Corson; Professor George Bush; and twenty-four Judges and ex-Judges of the U.S. Courts; *Victor Hugo; Baron and Baroness Von Vay; *W. Lloyd Garrison, U.S.A.; *Hon. R. Dale Owen, U.S.A.; *Hon. J. W. Edmonds, U.S.A.; *Epes Sargent; *Baron du

Digitized by Google

Potet; *Count A. D. Gasparin; *Baron L. de Guldenstübbe; *Dr. Godfrey Howitt and *Dr. J. B. Motherwell, of Melbourne; and the *Honorable John Bowie Wilson, of Sydney, Australia, &c., &c.

SOCIAL POSITION.—H. I. H. Nicholas, Duke of Leuchtenberg; H. R. H. the Prince of Solms; H. S. H. Prince Albrecht of Solms: *H. S. H. Prince Emile of Sayn Wittgenstein; Hon. Alexander Aksakof, Imperial Councillor of Russia; the Countess of Caithness and Duchesse de Pomar; the Hon. J. L. O'Sullivan, some time Minister of U.S.A. at the Court of Lisbon; M. Favre-Clavairoz, late Consul-General of France at Trieste; the late Emperors of *Russia and *France; Presidents *Thiers and *Lincoln, &c., &c.

WHAT IS SAID OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

J. H. FICHTE, THE GERMAN PHILOSOPHER AND AUTHOR.—"Notwithstanding my age (83) and my exemption from the controversies of the day, I feel it my duty to bear testimony to the great fact of Spiritualism. No one should keep silent."

PROFESSOR DE MORGAN, PRESIDENT OF THE MATHEMATICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.—"I am perfectly convinced that I have both seen and heard, in a manner which should make unbelief impossible, things called spiritual, which cannot be taken by a rational being to be capable of explanation by imposture, coincidence, or mistake. So far I feel the ground firm under me."

DR. ROBERT CHAMBERS.—"I have for many years *known* that these phenomena are real, as distinguished from impostures; and it is not of yesterday that I concluded they were calculated to explain much that has been doubtful in the past; and when fully accepted, will revolutionise the whole frame of human opinion on many important matters."—*Extract from a Letter to A. Russell Wallace.*

PROFESSOR HARE, EMERITUS PROFESSOR OF CHEMISTRY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA.—"Far from abating my confidence in the inferences respecting the agencies of the spirits of deceased mortals, in the manifestations of which I have given an account in my work, I have, within the last nine months" (this was written in 1858), "had more striking evidences of that agency than those given in the work in question."

PROFESSOR CHALLIS, THE LATE PLUMERIAN PROFESSOR OF ASTRONOMY AT CAMBRIDGE.—"I have been unable to resist the large amount of testimony to such facts, which has come from many independent sources, and from a vast number of witnesses. . . . . *In short, the testimony has been so abundant and consentaneous, that either the facts must be admitted to be such as are reported, or the possibility of certifying facts by human testimony must be given up.*—*Clerical Journal*, June, 1862.

Digitized by Google

PROFESSORS TORNEBOM AND EDLAND, THE SWEDISH PHYSICISTS.—"Only those deny the reality of spirit phenomena who have never examined them, but profound study alone *can* explain them. We do not know where we may be led by the discovery of the cause of these, as it seems, trivial occurrences, or to what new spheres of Nature's kingdom they may open the way; but that they will bring forward important results is already made clear to us by the revelations of natural history in all ages."—*Aftonblad* (Stockholm), October 30th, 1879.

PROFESSOR GREGORY, F.R.S.E.—"The essential question is this: What are the proofs of the agency of departed spirits? Although I cannot say that I yet feel the sure and firm conviction on this point which I feel upon others, I am bound to say that the higher phenomena, recorded by so many truthful and honourable men, appear to me to render the spiritual hypothesis almost certain. . . . . I believe that if I could myself see the higher phenomena alluded to I should be satisfied, as are all those who have had the best means of judging the truth of the spiritual theory."

LORD BROUGHAM.—"There is but one question I would ask the author: Is the Spiritualism of this work foreign to our materialistic, manufacturing age? No; for amidst the varieties of mind which divers circumstances produce are found those who cultivate man's highest faculties; to these the author addresses himself. But even in the most cloudless skies of scepticism I see a rain-cloud, if it be no bigger than a man's hand; it is modern Spiritualism."—*Preface by Lord Brougham to "The Book of Nature."* By C. O. Groom Napier, F.C.S.

THE LONDON DIALECTICAL COMMITTEE reported: "1. That sounds of a very varied character, apparently proceeding from articles of furniture, the floor and walls of the room—the vibrations accompanying which sounds are often distinctly perceptible to the touch—occur, without being produced by muscular action or mechanical contrivance. 2. That movements of heavy bodies take place without mechanical contrivance of any kind, or adequate exertion of muscular force on those present, and frequently without contact or connection with any person. 3. That these sounds and movements often occur at the time and in the manner asked for by persons present, and, by means of a simple code of signals, answer questions and spell out coherent communications."

CROMWELL F. VARLEY, F.R.S.—"Twenty-five years ago I was a hard-headed unbeliever. . . . . Spiritual phenomena, however, suddenly and quite unexpectedly, were soon after developed in my own family. . . . This led me to inquire and to try numerous experiments in such a way as to preclude, as much as circumstances would permit, the possiblility of trickery and self-deception." . . . . He then details various phases of the phenomena which had come within the range of his personal experience, and continues: "Other and numerous phenomena have

Digitized by Google

occurred, proving the existence (*a*) of forces unknown to science ; (*b*) the power of instantly reading my thoughts ; (*c*) the presence of some intelligence or intelligences controlling those powers. . . . . That the phenomena occur there is overwhelming evidence, and it is too late to deny their existence.

CAMILLE FLAMMARION, THE FRENCH ASTRONOMER, AND MEMBER OF THE ACADEMIE FRANCAISE.—"I do not hesitate to confirm my conviction, based on personal examination of the subject, that any scientific man who declares the phenomena denominated 'magnetic,' 'somnambulic,' 'mediumic,' and others not yet explained by science to be 'impossible,' is one who speaks without knowing what he is talking about; and also any man accustomed, by his professional avocations, to scientific observation—provided that his mind be not biassed by pre-conceived opinions, nor his mental vision blinded by that opposite kind of illusion, unhappily too common in the learned world, which consists in imagining that the laws of Nature are already known to us, and that everything which appears to overstep the limit of our present formulas is impossible—may acquire a radical and absolute certainty of the reality of the facts alluded to."

ALFRED RUSSELL WALLACE, F.G.S.—"My position, therefore, is that the Phenomena of Spiritualism in their entirety do *not* require further confirmation. They are proved, quite as well as any facts are proved in other sciences, and it is not denial or quibbling that can disprove any of them, but only fresh facts and accurate deductions from those facts. When the opponents of Spiritualism can give a record of their researches approaching in duration and completeness to those of its advocates ; and when they can discover and show in detail, either how the phenomena are produced or how the many sane and able men here referred to have been deluded into a coincident belief that they have witnessed them ; and when they can prove the correctness of their theory by producing a like belief in a body of equally sane and able unbelievers —then, and not till then, will it be necessary for Spiritualists to produce fresh confirmation of facts which are, and always have been, sufficiently real and indisputable to satisfy any honest and persevering inquirer."—*Miracles and Modern Spiritualism.*

DR. LOCKHART ROBERTSON.—"The writer" (*i.e.*, Dr. L. Robertson) "can now no more doubt the physical manifestations of *so-called* Spiritualism than he would any other fact, as, for example, the fall of the apple to the ground, of which his senses informed him. As stated above, there was no place or chance of any legerdemain, or fraud, in these physical manifestations. He is aware, even from recent experience, of the impossibility of convincing anyone, by a mere narrative of events apparently so out of harmony with all our knowledge of the laws which govern the physical world, and he places these facts on record rather as an act of justice due to those whose similar statements he had elsewhere doubted and denied, than with either the desire or hope of con-

Digitized by Google

vincing others. Yet he cannot doubt the ultimate recognition of facts of the truth of which he is so thoroughly convinced. Admit these physical manifestations, and a strange and wide world of research is opened to our inquiry. This field is new to the materialist mind of the last two centuries, which even in the writings of divines of the English Church, doubts and denies all spiritual manifestations and agencies, be they good or evil."—From a letter by Dr. Lockhart Robertson, published in the *Dialectical Society's Report on Spiritualism*, p. 24.

NASSAU WILLIAM SENIOR.—"No one can doubt that phenomena like these (Phrenology, Homœopathy, and Mesmerism) deserve to be observed, recorded, and arranged; and whether we call by the name of mesmerism, or by any other name, the science which proposes to do this, is a mere question of nomenclature. Among those who profess this science there may be careless observers, prejudiced recorders, and rash systematisers; their errors and defects may impede the progress of knowledge, but they will not stop it. And we have no doubt that, before the end of this century, the wonders which perplex almost equally those who accept and those who reject modern mesmerism will be distributed into defined classes, and found subject to ascertained laws—in other words, will become the subjects of a science." These views will prepare us for the following statement, made in the *Spiritual Magazine*, 1864, p. 336: "We have only to add, as a further tribute to the attainments and honours of Mr. Senior, that he was by long inquiry and experience a firm believer in spiritual power and manifestations. Mr. Home was his frequent guest, and Mr. Senior made no secret of his belief among his friends. He it was who recommended the publication of Mr. Home's recent work by Messrs. Longmans, and he authorized the publication, under initials, of one of the striking incidents there given, which happened to a near and dear member of his family."

BARON CARL DU PREL (Munich) in *Nord und Sud.*—"One thing is clear; that is, that psychography must be ascribed to a transcendental origin. We shall find: (1) That the hypothesis of prepared slates is inadmissible. (2) The place on which the writing is found is quite inaccessible to the hands of the medium. In some cases the double slate is securely locked, leaving only room inside for the tiny morsel of slate-pencil. (3) That the writing is actually done at the time. (4) That the medium is not writing. (5) The writing must be actually done with the morsel of slate or lead-pencil. (6) The writing is done by an intelligent being, since the answers are exactly pertinent to the questions. (7) This being can read, write, and understand the language of human beings, frequently such as is unknown to the medium. (8) It strongly resembles a human being, as well in the degree of its intelligence as in the mistakes sometimes made. These beings are therefore, although invisible, of human nature or species. It is no use whatever to fight against this proposition. (9) If these beings speak, they do so in human language

Digitized by Google

(10) If they are asked who they are, they answer that they are beings who have left this world. (11) When these appearances become partly visible, perhaps only their hands, the hands seen are of human form. (12) When these things become entirely visible, they show the human form and countenance. . . . . Spiritualism must be investigated by science. I should look upon myself as a coward if I did not openly express my convictions."

M. GUIZOT.—"The Spiritualists of our day have given to their researches and to their ideas a character really scientific. They have introduced into the study of man and of the intellectual world the method practised with so much success in the study of man and of the material world: that is to say—they have taken the observation of facts as the point of departure, and the constant guide of their investigations. They have rendered an immense service by enforcing a truth with which is connected man's right in this world, as well as his prospects beyond this world—I mean the fact of Man's Liberty. To the Spiritualistic school belong the honour of having firmly established, and rendered plain, the psychological fact of the freedom of the human will. Their doctrines, it is true, have for some time been hotly attacked, and the wind of the day does not blow into their sails; but, in spite of the blows which it receives, and returns—though with insufficient sturdiness—the Spiritualistic school, if we judge it by the names and the works which belong to it—by the talent and fame it comprises, remains, in our century, in possession of the domain and of the honour of philosophy."

MRS. J. T. BURTON.—"Spiritualism is the Angel of Reform, the Omega of sceptics, the death-knell of fanaticism. Obstacles huge as mountains surge their billows of opposing logic, but IT, with upheaval correspondences of grandeur and strength, confuses the learned *savans* and establishes on its wide, extended granite basis the *only Religion that can satisfy the Soul!*"

PROFESSOR TAIT, OF GLASGOW UNIVERSITY.—"The great advance in the future in natural theology is to be found in the corridor now opened up between science and religion, not through the material world, but through the 'immaterial.' The reconciliation of conflicting schemes of religious and scientific truth will be found by investigating the Unseen Universe. That avenue has been walled up; there has been placed over it, in the name of both science and religion, 'No thoroughfare this way!' In the twentieth century that wall will be thrown down from turret to foundation stone, and scientific and religious thought will be reconciled by an appeal to the realities of the unseen world."

WASHINGTON IRVING.—"What could be more consoling than the idea that the souls of those we once loved are permitted to return and watch over our welfare?—that affectionate and guardian spirits sit by our pillows when we sleep, keeping a vigil over our most helpless hours?—that beauty and innocence which have languished into the tomb yet smile unseen around us, revealing themselves in

Digitized by Google

those blest dreams wherein we live over again the hours of past endearment? A belief of this kind will, I think, be a new incentive to virtue, rendering us circumspect—even in our secret moments—from the idea that those we once loved and honoured are invisible witnesses of all our actions."

WESTMINSTER REVIEW, OCTOBER, 1875.—"The religion of the future is in our midst already, working like potent yeast in the minds of the people. It is in our midst to-day with signs and wonders, uprising like a swollen tide, and scorning the barriers of Nature's laws (or, rather, of those generally known and acknowledged). Yet, however irresistible its effects, they are not declared on the surface. It comes veiling its destined splendours beneath an exterior that invites contempt. Hidden from the prudent its truths are revealed to babes. Once more the weak will confound the mighty, the foolish the wise; and base things, and things despised—it may be, things that are not—bring to nought things that are: for it seems certain that Spiritualism will re-establish, on what professes to be ground of positive evidence, the fading belief in a future life—not such a future as is dear to old theology, but a future developed from the present, a continuation, under improved conditions, of the scheme of things around us. Further than this it is impossible to predict the precise development which Spiritualism may take in the future; just as it would have been impossible at the birth of Christianity to have predicted its actual subsequent development; but from the unexampled power possessed by this new religious force, of fusing with other creeds, it seems likely in the end to bring about a greater uniformity of belief than has ever yet been known."

RICHARD MOORFIELD.—"Psychical facts only require to be understood to be appreciated and universally accepted. Bigotry, prejudice, and misconception are the three great barriers to spiritual progress and true righteousness."

ARTHUR DEVLIN, JUN.—"When the whole race of mankind is swayed by the benign influence of Spiritualism (which will surely come to pass at no very distant date—there is no alternative, for Truth is mighty, and it will prevail), then will the true happiness of the masses be universally consulted, and all hostile feelings between individuals, as well as nations, be removed. Such inimitable love and tenderness are infused in the teachings of the brighter of our ethereal friends as will, ere long, usher in the greatest and most important Reformation that the earth has known."

The Editor is indebted to "LIGHT," a spiritualistic journal published in London, at 16 Craven Street, Charing Cross, W.C., for the greater portion of the foregoing testimony to psychical phenomena.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

POEMS

BY

HUGH JUNOR BROWNE.

"I may not be a poet; but I love the true and right,
And welcome freedom's dawning as the eagle greets the light.
Roll on, bright orb of Liberty; and, in thy ardent ray,
May every fetter mankind wears melt speedily away!"

—DENTON.

ODE TO TRUTH.

OH Truth! thou beauteous gem, thou pearl of all the seas,
Visible throughout God's works to men of all degrees.
Shine forth in all thy splendour, enlighten ev'ry mind,
Extinguish cherish'd errors, emancipate mankind!

From bigotry and priestcraft the souls of men release,
Let superstitious follies and false religions cease;
Then true worship by our acts shall senseless creeds displace,
And base notions of our God no longer man disgrace.

Then shall thy simple teachings, by Jesus once proclaimed,
Divested of all errors by which they've been defamed.
Shine as the second advent or love's sublime new birth,
And countless millenniums reign verily on Earth.

GOD'S HIGHEST GIFT TO MAN.

FATHER of all, we bow to Thee
The Fountain of all light,
Of life, of love, of peace, of joy,
Of wisdom and of might.

From Thee, O Father, we receive
Reason, the gift divine:
Oh! may it not lie profitless,
But in our actions shine;

Digitized by Google

In pleasant paths it will us lead,
Our brows adorn with crowns
Unfading in the lapse of time,
Untarnished by earth's frowns.

Too long it has remained unused
By man in cause of Truth.
Which he, in his great arrogance,
Enslaved hath forsooth.

At last the morn begins to dawn,
The darkness that surrounds
The earthly pilgrimage of man
Shall break with joyous sounds;

Man's destiny shall soon be known,
By countless millions blind
To th' light which God hath given
To one and all mankind.

Then let us raise the voice of praise
To Him from whom doth flow
All mercies. and on each of us
His blessings doth bestow;

And in those realms of pure delight
Where angels sound His praise,
When o'er our earthly course we've run,
Our shouts of joy we'll raise.

OUT OF DARKNESS INTO LIGHT.

Dear brothers and sisters awake to the light
Which shineth for all who make use of their sight.
Let old superstition and darkness give place
To those truths which are open to all of the race.

With reason and conscience we all have been blest.
Then why not put "Faith" to a rational test?
Can it, think you, differ from ev'rything else,
And old fables be true and Nature be false?

Can that which we'd spurn with the utmost contempt
Be true because old, or from logic exempt?
Can God, who in all things we've found wise and kind,
Of old been to justice and goodness quite blind?

If not, you're in error regarding His truth,
Through false teachings that warped your judgment in youth,
And th' sooner you quit these, the sooner you'll rise
Above those old fables which still blind your eyes.

Digitized by Google

I do not upbraid you, I once was like you,
Whatever was taught me, believed it was true,
And however absurd that teaching might be,
To doubt it I dared not, lest God might curse me.

Thank goodness such teachings are cast to the wind,
Since I found it was wrong for a rational mind
To continue to hold, as being the truth,
The follies friends taught me when I was a youth.

THE LIGHT OF TRUTH.

Before this little speck called Earth
Had e'er revolved in space.
Ten thousand thousand greater orbs
Had long since run their race;

And when this world, yet in its youth,
Its destiny hath run.
A thousand other worlds will then
Their courses have begun.

Eternity, oh, wondrous word!
Beyond man's power of thought,
In thee the purposes of God
Have all to be outwrought.

Yet some men talk about God's will
As if they knew it all,
And as they had been present at
Man's birth and fabled fall;

They speak of God as though He had
To them His plans laid bare,
And of Christ's crucifixion
As if they had been there.

O, foolish men! with reason blest,
Cast fiction to the winds,
And let the light of truth henceforth
Illuminate your minds;

Retain the true and good in all,
Put all things to the test,
And hearken to the voice within,
Which is, of all guides, best

THE VOICE OF REASON.

There's not a blade of grass that grows
From out the humble sod,
But proves intelligence therein,
And testifies of God.

Digitized by Google

There's not a star howe'er remote,
Or dimly it may shine,
But has a purpose to fulfil
In Nature's grand design.

There's not a single soul on earth,
Degraded or refined,
But has within a spark divine,
Hence an immortal mind.

There's not a soul in God's great world,
Possessed of reason's gift,
But has the power, if he choose,
The truth from lies to sift.

THE TRUE NOBLEMAN.

He loves to write truth and others to teach
To reject those false doctrines which hypocrites preach.
He loves to write truth that others may learn
To make use of their reason and old fables spurn.
He loves to write truth that others may read
That a pure and clear conscience is all that we need.

He loves to speak out and let others know
That we'll reap in the future whate'er we now sow.
He loves to speak out and truly declare
That a bright future awaits each one who acts fair.
He loves to speak out and others to tell
That true wisdom is Heaven and ignorance Hell.

He loves to do good and God's love proclaim
Which is perfect, and boundless, and always the same.
He loves to do good that others may see
That alone by good actions we happy may be.
He loves to do good and dry up all tears
Since our loved ones still live whom we've mourned for for years.

TRUTH'S JOY BELLS.

Ring out, ye bells, that God ne'er needs
Belief or faith in man-made creeds ;
Ring out the dread of priestly ban,
Ring out the fear of "death" in man.
Ring in the truth of God's great love
For all on Earth and all above.
Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Digitized by Google

GOD'S HOLY TRUTH.

I WRITE for those who love the Truth,
And not for bigots tied
To ancient superstitious tales
That tell how God has lied.

I write to all who love the Right
To aid me in the fight
Against that stagnant Faith that stops
Man's progress to the light.

I write to tell those holy truths
That priestly lies dispel,
Which promise heaven to the few,
And send the rest to hell.

I write to say that God has loved
Not few but all the race.
And that He has evolved them all
By laws they ne'er can trace.

I write to tell of God's great love,
Which here we dimly see,
And that by actions pure and good
We all may happy be.

I write to say that death is not
God's curse upon mankind.
But that it is a blessed change,
As all ere long shall find.

I write to cheer all downcast souls.
And dry their bitter tears.
To comfort and support the sad
And banish all their fears.

I write to tell God's Holy Truth,
Which nothing can gainsay.
That there awaits for all in time
A bright eternal day.

THIS LIFE IS BUT A STAGE.

I PRIZE those truths supernal which others proudly scorn,
As I love the cheerful sunshine upon a wintry morn.
I strive to gain more knowledge where'er 'tis to be found;
I search for it above, below, and find it all around.
It tells me of that wondrous Power, that Fountain of all life;
It shows me that new beauties rise e'en out of deadly strife;
It proves that all misfortunes are but blessings in disguise,
That much of that for which men strive, they truly should despise;

Digitized by Google

It shows this life is but a stage, on which we all must act,
That death of matter only is—of life 'tis not a fact.
As out of atoms worlds are formed, imbued with forde and life,
So out of thoughts man is evolved upon this stage of strife;
Conditions are but altered—man's character's the same,
When death removes him from this scene of honour or of shame.
Then let us strive to do what's right while this short act doth run,
So at that change we may not feel ashamed of what we've done.

OLD SUPERSTITION.

Oh! blinded friends, ye cannot see
The sunshine through the veil
That superstitious creeds have drawn
Across death's mystic vale;
Nor can ye learn the joyous news
God's angels bring to all,
Until you cast aside false views
Based on the Adamic fall.

THE FALSE AND THE TRUE.

How little men think of God's love,
Though all His mercies share;
They paint Him as a wrathful judge
Who visits with despair
All those who use "the gift divine"
And spurn all senseless creeds,
Who do not place their trust in "faith'
But rest on righteous deeds.

God is no partial potentate
Seated on whiten'd throne,
Frowning in anger on all those
Who come to him alone;
All are the children of His love
Though oft they've gone astray,
The road is open to return
To choose the better way.

No intercessor we require,
God's love is over all,
Impartially His blessings flow
Upon both great and small—
Then dread not death at its approach,
But bear in mind while here,
The mem'ry of an unkind act
Is quite enough to fear.

Digitized by Google

Heaven and hell are states of mind,
They're not localities,
But surely this them does not make
The less realities?
As by our past so are we now,
Just by a law as fair,
According to our actions here
So shall we reap when there;

For, as man lives upon the Earth,
So enters he his sphere
To find his home in higher life,
Just what he made it here;
And, as by care we may when here
Our characters improve.
So there we can, by actions good,
Our earthly stains remove.

Then let us strive to do what's right—
Let all our thoughts be pure,
And let us love what's true and good,
Thus happiness secure.
For earthly things must pass away
With time's destroying rust,
But truth and right will stand for aye,
So let us in them trust;
Let's choose the good, reject the bad,
To no man's doctrine nod;
Our conscience is sole monitor
Between ourselves and God.

A VOICE FROM THE UNSEEN.

I HEARD a voice say unto me:
"Write down your thoughts, dear friend,
They may not move the world to think,
But that way they will tend;
For ev'ry thought, howe'er expressed,
Its impress leaves behind,
And will, if good, take root and grow
Like seeds blown by the wind.

"Heed not the scorn of foolish men
Who close their eyes to truth;
Your world, though old in days, is still
In wisdom but in youth.
A few more years will roll along
Ere man-made creeds are spurned
And all shall hail with joy those truths
Which few as yet have learned.

Digitized by Google

"God's call to higher life will, then,
No more be held in dread,
For all will realize the fact
There truly are no dead;
Since death is but a change of state,
A bursting of the shell,
Whereby we enter into bliss
No earthly words can tell."

THE HIGHER DOMAIN OF NATURE.

To all who have loved ones "dead." I write
To tell of God's boundless love;
Of the joys that await each sorrowing one
In that brighter sphere above.

Oh! 'tis not a world, as falsely taught,
Of joy for only the few,
Where the many will suffer eternal woe;
Thank heaven, this is not true.

But 'tis where our dear ones gone before.
Now freed from all toil and care.
Still retain their fond love for their friends on Earth
Till they meet in that land so fair;

Where each one enjoys as much of bliss
As they're fitted to receive,
And where we're rewarded for good deeds done,
And not for what we believe.

Therefore let all endeavour to act
As the conscience doth direct.
So, when there, we may have but few ill deeds
On which to sadly reflect.

THE STING OF DEATH DESTROYED.

I HAVE seen the hills and valleys in the beauteous Summerland;
I have heard the angels singing across the golden strand;
I have grasped the hands of loved ones who've only gone before.
And who'll greet me with a welcome when I reach the other shore.

For years I've held communion with the dear ones of my youth,
And from their loving hearts received sweet messages of truth;
Our children, too, they often come to tell us of their love,
And how they are progressing in the angel home above.

Digitized by Google

Thus my hope has changed to knowledge, all fear of death hath fled,
I know that I shall live again, though numbered with "the dead,"
And that I shall return in love to those I leave behind,
To guide and comfort them through life with counsels wise and kind.

Oh! could I but impart to all this knowledge of God's love,
Which here we only dimly see—it shines more clear above:
Thrice happy will the world become when this great truth is known,
And that, as said of old, we reap just as on Earth we've sown.

Then trust not in those foolish creeds for priestly ends devised,
But hearken to the voice within, and by it be advised:
To wisdom you will thus attain, and then can truly sing:
Oh! grave where is thy victory? Oh! death where is thy sting?

SHALL WE MEET ACROSS THE RIVER?

YES, we will meet across the river
When our earthly days have fled,
We shall join the loved gone thither
When we're what the world calls "dead."

We shall see and know each other,
And be met with kind embrace,
Then we'll work with joy together
For the advancement of the race.

There no distance can us sever,
For both space and time have flown,
There we sigh for lost friends never
And the word farewell's unknown.

Oh! the bliss beyond that river,
Death no ties of love doth sever,
There true friendship's bound together,
Forever—and forever.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

WORKS

BY

HUGH JUNOR BROWNE.

RATIONAL CHRISTIANITY THE RELIGION OF HUMANITY.

Crown 8vo, cloth, 6s.

THE HOLY TRUTH: or, THE COMING REFORMATION.

Octavo, cloth, reduced to 7s. 6d.

THE RELIGION OF THE FUTURE; or, THE HIGHER LAW OF TRUTH AND RIGHT.

Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s; paper, 2s.

DELUSION AND REALITY; or, WHO WANTS THE TRUTH?

Octavo, cloth, 2s. 6d; paper, 1s. 6d.

THE HIGHER BRANCH OF SCIENCE: or, MATERIALISM REFUTED BY FACTS.

Paper, 6d.; with Addenda, 1s.

ASTRONOMY AND ITS BEARING ON THE POPULAR FAITH.

Paper, 1s.

ATHEISM PHILOSOPHICALLY REFUTED.

Paper, 1s.

THE CONFLICT BETWEEN AUTHORITY AND REASON; or ARTIFICIAL AND NATURAL RELIGION.

Paper, 2s.

THE QUESTION SETTLED; or, RELIGION VERSUS SUPERSTITION.

Paper, 1s.

COMFORT FOR THE BEREAVED; or, WHERE ARE OUR LOVED ONES?

Paper, 2s.

The above can be obtained from Mr. BAMFORD, 87 Little Collins Street East, Melbourne; or, Messrs. GEORGE ROBERTSON & CO., Melbourne, and Sydney.

Digitized by Google

MELBOURNE:

KEMP AND BOYCE, PRINTERS,

RUSSELL STREET.

Digitized by Google

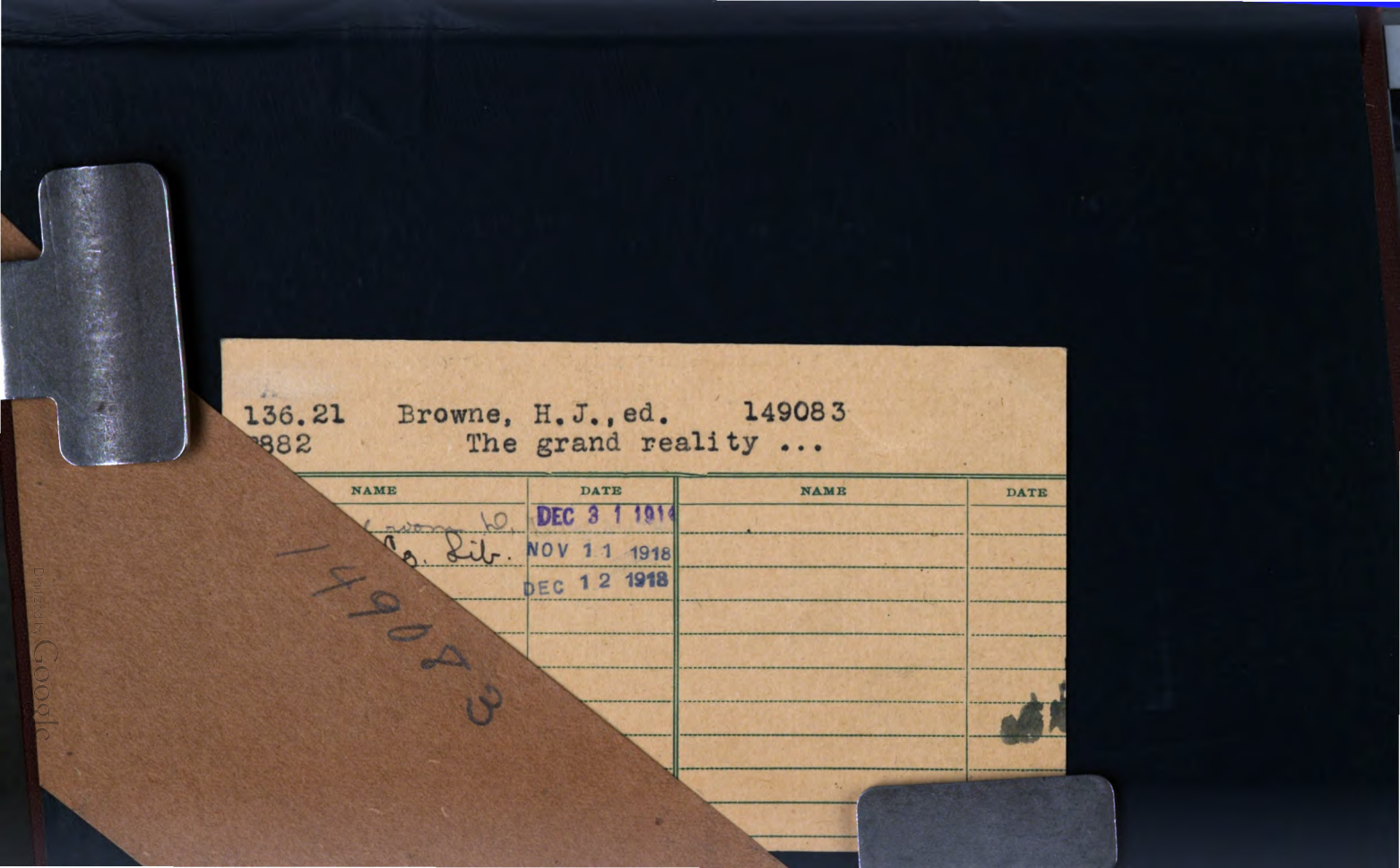
Digitized by Google

STANFORD UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

To avoid fine, this book should be returned on or before the date last stamped below.

NOV 11 1918

Digitized by Google


136.21
882
Browne, H.J., ed.
The grand reality ...
149083
NAME
DATE
DEC 3 1 1914
NOV 1 1 1918
DEC 1 2 1918
NAME
DATE
149083
Digitized by Google